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The very serious delay in issuing this Official Report of the Conference held in Exeter in 1911 is much to be regretted, as well as the fact that many typographical and other inaccuracies in it have unfortunately not been corrected.

It is hoped, however, that the readers will be indulgent, as they are no doubt aware that the Report has been brought out under most unusual and unforeseen difficulties, and that to have had it properly corrected and reprinted (the type having been distributed) would have entailed a very heavy extra expense, and would likewise have further delayed the issue of the book, probably for several months.

The Committee desire to take this opportunity of expressing their appreciation of the services rendered by the blind stenographer, Mr. Maurice J. Myers.

June 14th, 1912.

REPORT

OF THE

Third Triennial International

Conference on the Blind,

HELD AT THE

BARNFIELD HALL, EXETER,

AND

EXHIBITION OF WORK,

HELD AT THE

QUEEN'S HALL, EXETER,

July 3rd to July 7th, 1911.

Under the Patronage of

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The Right Hon. Lord Clifford of Chudleigh.
The Right Hon. Lord Clinton.
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Robins, Albert, A.R.C.O., Shrewley, Warwick.

Stainsby, Mrs., British and Foreign Blind Association, 206 Great Portland Street, W.
Snow, Mrs., Trent House, Oxford Road, Gunnersbury, W.
Sanders, Ven. Archdeacon, Cathedral Close, Exeter.
Shelley, Sir John, Bart., Shobrooke Park, Crediton.
Sillifant, A. O., J.P., Culm Leigh, Stoke Canon.
Slater, Mrs., Bescott Hall, Walsall.
Spanner, V., MUS. BAC., F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M., Royal Normal College, Upper Norwood, S.E.
Souter, H. C., A.R.C.O., Institution for the Blind, Exeter.

Stocker, Alderman John, J.P., Cowick Street, Exeter.
Smith, Miss E., Holmwood, Weston-super-Mare.
Scott, E. R., Shere, Surrey.
Swinnerton, Rev. J., Llandevaud Vicarage, Newport, Monmouth.
Swinnerton, Mrs. do. do.
Smith, Rev. J. H. Gordon, B.A., Porthcawl, Bridgend, Glam.
Stericker, A. C., L.R.A.M., 19 Beaconsfield Place, Aberdeen.
Stone, Mrs. W. M., Edinburgh.

Thurman, Mrs., Institution for the Blind, Edgbaston.
*Tansey, Mrs., Whitley Bridge, Wakefield, Yorks.
Townsend, Miss I., 2 Church Place, Kemp Town, Brighton.

Uren, Mrs. Edgbaston, Birmingham.

Varwell, Alderman H. B., J.P., Pennsylvania Park, Exeter.

*Warrilow, Mrs., 10 St. Margaret's Road, Oxford.
Watling, H., F.R.C.O., Royal Normal College, Upper Norwood, S.E.
Wolstenholme, W., MUS. BAC., 11 Hillgrove Road, Hampstead, N.W.
Wright, Miss Edith, Castle Lodge, Sandal, Wakefield.
Whiteman, Miss N., Avon View, Stratford-on-Avon.
Wheeler, Miss P., 19 Hartfield Road, Eastbourne.
Whittleton, Rev. G. F., M.A., 12 Piedmont Road, Plumstead, Kent.
Willey, Miss M., Springfield Road, Exeter.

Young, Rev. David, St. David's Hill, Exeter.

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*Honorary Members not entitled to participate in discussion or to vote.

REGULATIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE.

1. That no person shall be entitled to participate in the Conference discussions unless he (or she) be a recognised delegate or member of Conference.

2. Visitors may be admitted to the gallery of the Hall by ticket; but shall not be entitled to take any part in the proceedings.

This permission shall not extend to the session to be held on Thursday afternoon.

3. That the selected compilers of Papers be limited to 20 minutes.

4. That each Paper as soon as read be followed by a discussion, and that the length of the discussion be determined by the Chairmen of the respective sessions.

5. That any Member of the Conference desirous of speaking on any subject in a session shall send, during the meeting, his card, giving his description or connection with the cause of the Blind, to the Chairman, and await his call.

6. That speakers be limited to 10 minutes, but that this period may be reduced or extended in special cases, at the discretion of the Chairman.

7. That all questions in regard to limiting or extending the length of the speeches, and the selection of speakers whose cards have been sent up, be in the discretion of the Chairman, whose decision shall be final.

8. That speakers shall address the Chairman, and confine themselves strictly to the subject under discussion.

9. That no Member be permitted to speak twice in the same discussion except to a point of explanation.

10. That no formal resolution be moved at any meeting of the Conference except by consent of, and by arrangement with, the General Committee.

11. That the official language of the Conference be English.

NOTE.—The Hon. General Secretary's bell will give warning two minutes before the allotted time for papers or speeches, and will sound again at its expiration.

PROGRAMME OF CONFERENCE.

SUNDAY, 2nd JULY. "Conference Sunday."

Arrangements have been made whereby several of the pulpits of the various Churches and Chapels in Exeter will be occupied by blind Clergy, whilst the musical portion of the services will be taken by blind Organists.

Delegates are invited to attend the afternoon (3 p.m.) service at the Cathedral, when a sermon appropriate to the occasion will be preached by Prebendary Martin (of Exmouth). The voluntary at the conclusion of the service will be played by a blind organist.

By the courtesy of the Dean and Chapter, and the Canon in residence, the Cathedral pulpit will be occupied at the Evening Service by a blind preacher (the Rev. C. E. Bolam), and the voluntary at the conclusion of the service will again be played by a blind organist.

MONDAY, 3rd JULY. (Forenoon.) Opening of Exhibition.

The Exhibition, which will be typical of the various industries carried on by the blind, and which will be held at the **Queen's Hall, Paris Street,** Exeter, will be formally opened at noon by the **Mayor of Exeter,** who will be accompanied by the Sheriff and Members of the Council.

The Exhibition will be opened until 9.30 p.m., and thereafter daily from 10 a.m. until 9.30 p.m., except on Friday, the 7th inst., when the Exhibition will close at 9 p.m.

Lectures and Demonstrations on Poultry Rearing will be given on Tuesday and Thursday from 9 to 10 a.m. and from 5.30 to 6.30 p.m.

Massage demonstrations will be given on Wednesday and Friday from 9 to 10 a.m. and from 5.30 to 6.30 p.m.

Afternoon.

First Session of Conference, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

BARNFIELD HALL, EXETER.

Chairman—THE RIGHT REV. THE BISHOP OF MARLBOROUGH (Dean of Exeter).

"God Save the King."

Prayer.

Opening Address by the Chairman :

Miss E. W. Austin (Secretary and Librarian to the Incorporated National Lending Library for the Blind) will read a paper on "**Libraries for the Blind.**"

Opener of Discussion : **Miss E. M. Bainbrigge,** Secretary to the London Home Teaching Society.

Evening. 8 p.m.

Reception in the Royal Albert Memorial College and Museum by The Worshipful the Mayor and the Mayoress of Exeter.

TUESDAY, 4th JULY.

Second Session of Conference, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Chairman—THE SHERIFF OF EXETER (J. G. Owen, Esq.)

"**Teachers of the Blind**: Their Training, Qualifications, and reasonable prospects of Employment." By the **Rev. St. Clare Hill**, F.C.T.B., Principal of the Royal Leatherhead School for the Blind.

Opener of Discussion: **Mr. W. H. Illingworth**, F.C.T.B., Superintendent of Henshaw's Blind Asylum, Manchester.

Third Session of Conference, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Chairman—COUNCILLOR C. J. ROSS.

"**A Retrospect of the more recent Musical Education of the Blind and Suggestions as to the Future.**" By **Mr. H. C. Warrilow**, F.R.C.O.

Opener of Discussion: **Mr. Harry E. Platt**, Teacher of Music at the Birmingham Institution for the Blind.

8 p.m.

Concert by Blind Artistes in the Barnfield Hall.

(Music by Blind Composers).

WEDNESDAY, 5th JULY.

Fourth Session of Conference, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Chairman—HY. GADD, ESQ., J.P. (Vice-President of the West of England Institution for the Blind).

"**After-care; and the better and more general Employment of the Blind.**" By **Mr. Hy. Stainsby**, F.C.T.B., General Secretary to the British and Foreign Blind Association.

Opener of Discussion—**H. W. P. Pine, Esq.** (Secretary to the Midland Institution of the Blind, Nottingham).

Fifth Session of Conference, 2 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Chairman—SEBASTIAN C. SNOW, ESQ. (President of the West of England Institution for the Blind.

Discussion on Mr. Stainsby's paper continued.

Evening.

Informal discussion on matters relative to the Education and Training of the Blind.

THURSDAY, 6th JULY.

Sixth Session of Conference, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Chairman—ALDERMAN JOHN STOCKER, J.P. (Chairman of Exeter Education Committee).

"**Training in the Requirements of Social Life at Home and in Society, and the best methods of securing it.**" By **Lady Campbell**, Hon. Lady Superintendent, Royal Normal College for the Blind, Upper Norwood, London.

Opener of Discussion—**Mr. A. Siddall** (Rochdale).

Seventh Session of Conference, 2 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Chairman—H. J. WILSON, F.C.T.B.,

Special Session for Reception of Committee Reports ; Election of Committees, etc.

8 p.m.

Lecture by **Mr. H. C. Preece** (Travelling Secretary to the British and Foreign Blind Association on **" The Comedy of Daily Life."**

Reception by Dr. Henry Davy at Southernhay House.

FRIDAY, 7th JULY.

Eighth Session of Conference, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Chairman—SIR ROBT. H. S. D. L. NEWMAN, BART.

" The General Pensioning of the Blind : The raising of National Funds as the best way of solving the Pensioning Problem." By **Mr. Alrik Lundberg** (Stockholm), President of the Swedish Federation of the Blind.

Opener of Discussion—**Mr. W. H. Tate** (Bradford)

Ninth Session of Conference, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Chairman—HENRY DAVY, ESQ., M.D. (Ex-President British Medical Association).

" Ophthalmia-Neonatorum and its Administrative Control." By **Dr. Geo. Reid,** Medieal Officer of Health, Staffordshire County Council.

Opener of Discussion—**Dr. Sheppard** (Liverpool).

Votes of thanks to Local Authorities.

Benediction : Rev. G. F. Harris.

Friday Evening.

At the request of several members of the Conference, the evening has been left open for informal discussion on matters of general interest, for which no place could be allocated in the previous Sessions.

SATURDAY, 8th JULY.

For those desirous of visiting some of the beauty spots of Devon, an Excursion will be arranged : By rail to Totnes—by steamer down the River Dart (" the English Rhine ") to Dartmouth—thence by rail or steamer to Torquay—returning in the evening by rail to Exeter.

REGULATIONS, &c.,

for the Exhibition to be held in connection with the Conference.

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1. The Exhibition (which will be held at THE QUEEN'S HALL, PARIS STREET) will be formally opened at noon, on Monday, July 3rd, and will be open from 10 a.m. to 9.30 p.m. on the four following days.

2. The Exhibition will be open, free of charge, to Delegates and Members on production of their Conference cards or badges.

3. The Exhibition will be open to the general public, free of charge, by tickets obtainable from either the Hon. General Secretary or the Hon. Local Secretary; or on production of visiting card.

4. The goods for Exhibition will be classified as follows:
   (*a*) Goods made by the Blind only.
   (*b*) Machines and apparatus made exclusively for the use of the Blind.
   (*c*) Other Machines and apparatus which may be used by the Blind.
   All articles in Class (*a*) must be *bona fide* work of the Blind; or, if otherwise, the amount of sighted labour must be specially stated.

5. Limited space, free of cost, will be reserved for Exhibits under Classes (*a*) and (*b*). A charge will be made for Exhibits under Class (*c*).

6. A list of Exhibits proposed to be sent must be forwarded to Mr. C. M. Collingwood, St. David's Hill, Exeter, *on or before May 31st.*

7. All Articles for Exhibition must have attached to them an official label, application for which, stating the number of labels required, must be made to Mr. C. M. Collingwood.

8. All Exhibits must be sent carriage paid, and will be returned carriage forward, at the risk of the Exhibitors both ways, and each package must bear the official label of the Exhibition.

9. All Exhibits must be received not later than Tuesday June 27th.

10. Every care will be exercised in regard to the Exhibits, but the Committee will not hold themselves responsible for any loss or damage caused thereto while in their possession.

11. Articles may be for sale if desired, and in the case of those exhibited under Class (*a*) the Committee will endeavour to arrange for the supervision of the sale; but for those under Classes (*b*) and (*c*) the Exhibitors must provide their own representatives.

Representatives need not be sent unless Exhibits are for sale. It must, however, be distinctly understood that all goods are sent for Exhibition purposes only.

Nothing must be removed until the close of the Exhibition on Friday Evening, July 7th.

Instructions for Exhibitors.

1. If Exhibits be for Sale, prices must be attached in plain figures.

2. Each Parcel or Case of Exhibits must contain two clearly written lists of articles enclosed, one of which should be securely gummed on the inside of the package, with prices if for sale.

3. Each Article must have attached to it the little label which will be supplied for the purpose, having particulars as set forth thereon; also two well *addressed* labels for returning package to Exhibitor.

All goods should be sent in a box or basket and not merely in paper.

LIST OF EXHIBITS. Schedule A.

Ashton-under-Lyne Home Teaching Society for the Blind.

Mats, Chair Seating.

Bath Home Teaching Society for the Blind.

Fancy Baskets, Door Mats, Petticoats, Stockings, Pincushions Specimen of Boot Mending.

Belfast Workshops for the Industrious Blind.

Bamboo Tables, Upholstered Wicker Chair, Upholstered Drawing Room Chair, Wastepaper Baskets, Soiled Linen Baskets, Cane Lounge, Bath Chair.

Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind.

Educational—Basket Work, Mats, Brushes, Knitting, Boot Making, and Clog Making.

Bradford Incorporated Institution for the Blind.

Baskets—Picnic, Waste Paper, Linen, Hampers, Umbrella, Dog, etc. Brushes—Hearth, Scrub, Dabbing, Stove, etc. Brooms—Weed, Fan, Mill, etc. Hand Knitting—Knitted Bodice, Bed Jackets, Vests, Silk and Woollen Shawls, Bed Socks, Silk and Woollen Motor Scarves, Child's Coat, Jersey, Babies Jackets, Socks, Rattle and Dolls. Cotton Work—Antimacassar, Nightdress Case and Sponge Bag.

Brighton. Barclay Home for the Blind.

Weaving—Costume Linen, Lustrine Materials, Serges, Hopsacks, Blouses, Aprons, Chamber Towels, Bath Towels, Glass Cloths, Kitchen Cloths, etc.. Bath Rugs, Hearth Rugs, Tapestry for Church Pews, Portieres. Hand Knitting—Golf Coats, Shawls, Jerseys, Boys' Suits, Theatre Wraps, Spencers, Slippers, etc. Machine Knitting—Socks and Stockings. Baskets—Soiled Linen, Flower, Waste Paper, Work, Packing and Library, etc.

Cheltenham and Gloucestershire Society for the Blind.

Work Table, Work Basket, Nest of Flower Baskets, Nest of Waste Paper Baskets, Rose Basket, Large Travelling Basket, Oak Trays.

Devonport and Western Counties Association for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind.

Knitting—Nightdress Case, and Brush and Comb Bag, Ladies Jersey, Gents' Fancy Socks, Ladies Vests, Child's Wool Petticoat. Straw Goods—Beehive, Straw Kneeler. Basket Work—Flasket, Cane Coal Maund, Square Hampers, Linen, Fancy, Butter and Work Baskets, Table, Doll's Cradle.

Exeter. West of England Institution for the Blind.

Machine Knitting—Gents' Socks, Stockings (Cycle, Gents', Ladies' and Children's), Ladies' Vests, Children's Vests and Children's Jerseys.
Woodwork. Manual Training.

FIRST YEAR.

(*a*) Exercises I to XI include the following tool operations—Marking, Sawing, Gauging, Boring, Nailing, Chiselling, Planing and Spokeshaving.
Models—Round Mat, Square Prism, Octagonal Prism, Round Rules, Key Rack.
Joints—Lapped Halving on Flat, and Lapped Halving on Edge.

SECOND YEAR.

(*b*) Models—Bracket, Soap Box, Letter Rack, Pipe Rack, Knife Box, Egg Stand, Collar Box, Book Rest and Coat Rack.
(*c*) Models made by a blind pupil (his own designs).
(*d*) Group of advanced Models.

Edinburgh. Royal Blind Asylum and School, Nicholson Street.

Hair Mattress, Wool Mattress, Feather Bolster and Pillows, Wool Bolster and Pillows, Upholstered Lounge Chair, Upholstered Hurlingham Chair.

Edinburgh. Royal Blind Asylum and School, West Craigmillar.

Hull Blind Institution.

Cane Coal, Chalk and Cliff Basket, Willow Coal, Split Cane and Randed Cane Landing Basket, Ship Fendoff, Willow Chalk Basket.

Institution for the Blind, Tomteboda, Sweden.

Knitting, Weaving, etc.

Leatherhead. Royal School for the Indigent Blind.

Basket Work, Mats, Brushes, Hand and Machine Knitting.

London County Council Blind Schools.

Kindergarten and Educational Exhibits.

Liverpool. Institution for the Blind, Hardman Street.

Men's and Women's Boots—Boot Repairing. Wicker Goods. Woodwork Models.

Liverpool. Wavertree School for the Blind.

Kindergarten Exhibits. Baskets.

Manchester. Henshaw's Blind Asylum, Old Trafford.

Needlework—Slippers, Fascinators, Vests, Jackets, Curtain Loopers, Crochet Bags, Under Garments, Stockings, Gloves, etc. Swedish Hand-loom Weaving—Dusters, Glass Cloths, Belts, Ties, Aprons, Overalls, Dress Materials, etc. Baskets—Travelling Hampers, Hand Baskets, Linen, Upholstered Chair, Dog Kennel, etc. Mats—Chain, Brush, Wool Bordered. Brushes—Toy Banister, Carpet, Mill, Deck Scrubs, Window Washers, Cane and Weed Brooms, Whisks, etc.

Miss M. J. Davis, Hillingdon Heath, Uxbridge, Middlesex.

Needlework and Crochet Work.

Miss Douglas Hamilton, 17 Callow Street, Chelsea, S.W., Hon. Treas., "Eyes to the Blind."

Spencers, Pyjamas, Overalls, Blouses, Macrame Crochet Bags, Babies' Parisian Jacket and Vest, Ladies' Riding Gloves, Children's Jerseys and Caps, Ladies' Long Coats.

Nottingham. Midland Institution for the Blind.

Needlework—Including Silk Shawl, Antimacassars, etc. Swedish Hand-loom Weaving — Dusters, Aprons, Dress Materials, Lustrine, Serge, Tweed, etc. Machine Knitting—Ladies' and Gents' Fine Hosiery, Gents' Winter and Fancy Topped Cycle Hose. Woodwork—Including Exercises in Planing, Ganging, Chiselling, etc., Brackets, Trays, Racks, Knife Box, Book Shelves, etc. Brushes—Brooms and Household Brushes, Fancy Picture, Hearth, Machine Brushes, etc. Baskets—Laundry and Hosiery Hampers, Lace Factory Baskets, Bottle Baskets, Fancy Baskets, Wicker Chairs, etc. Mats—Wool Rugs, Figured Border Mats, Yarn and Chain Mats, Yarn Coal Bag, Checked, Striped and Plain Mattings. Bedding—Hair Mattress, Bolster and Pillows, Ottoman.

Working Exhibit—Hand-looms will be worked by blind girls demonstrating the making of serge and towelling.

Nottingham. City of Nottingham Education Committee Blind School, Colville Street.

Hand Knitting, Purse, Blouse, Dress Top, Doll, Waistcoat.

Plymouth. South Devon and Cornwall Institution for the Blind.

Traveller and Laundry Hamper, Hooded Chair, etc., Fibre Mats, Hand and Machine Knitting.

Preston. Homes for the Blind, for North and North-East Lancashire.

Paper Flowers, Baskets, Mats.

LIST OF EXHIBITS. Schedule B.

British and Foreign Blind Association, 206 Great Portland Street, London.

Braille Shorthand Machine; Revised Braille Shorthand; Stainsby-Wayne Braille Writer, Large Interlining; Stainsby-Wayne Braille Writer, Small Interpointing; Large Braille Frame, Swivel Guide; Small Braille Frame, Hinged Guide; "Merrick" Frame; Pocket Frames, four kinds; Braille Talker; Arithmetic Frame with Arithmetic and Algebra Types; Scientific Books, illustrated, four Braille volumes; Sheets of Diagrams; The Discovery of New Worlds, three Braille volumes; St. John (R.V.), Grade II. (paper covers); St. John (R.V.), Grade III. (paper covers); Loeschhorn, Book I., Draughts and Chess Board and Men; Pencil Writing Frames, three kinds; MSS. Binding cases, eyeletted and with tabs; Spring Clip Binding Case; Clock Dial; Compasses with embossing wheel; Squared Paper; Brass Foot-rule for the Blind; Tape Measure; Maps (England and Wales, Ireland); Raised Line Note Paper; Playing Cards for the Blind; Pupils' Dominoes; Progress Book; Pocket-size Books—"Postmistress of Laurel Run"; Braille Magazines, four kinds; "Braille Review."

Royal Blind Asylum and School: West Craigmillar, Edinburgh.

Books and Magazines.

Esperanto Section of the National Lending Library: Miss H. E. Boord, 8 Stanley Gardens, London, W.

Braille Volumes (various).
Braille Esperanto Primers.
Esperanto Grammar (Sighted Print).

Incorporated National Lending Library for the Blind, 125 Queen's Road, Bayswater, W.

Books and Library Apparatus for the Blind.

M. Maurice Constanoon, Blind Asylum, Lausanne.

Writing Apparatus and Photographs.

Moon's Society, 104 Queen's Road, Brighton.

Various Specimens of English and Foreign Books in the Moon Type; Diagrams and Maps; Writing Frames; Moon Type Embosser.

Institution for the Blind, St. Petersburg, Russia.

Writing Apparatus; Braille Books.

Institution for the Blind, Tomteboda, Sweden,

Writing Apparatus.

Shadrach Ferris, "Dolce Domum," County Rd., Swindon

Induction Coil.

B. J. G. Swinney, "Lorne Villa," Elm Road, Sidcup. Kent.

Hammocks.

Christopher Cyril Baskerville Gunson, 71 Queen Street, Littlehampton, Sussex.

Two Stationary Steam Engines; one Brass Candlestick; one Copper Candlestick.

M. D. Cross, Patentee and Manufacturer of Cork Fabric, Stonehouse, Plymouth.

Sanitary Cork Bath, Mats, Cork Knife Boards.

H. N. Hobbah, School for the Blind, York.

Apparatus for Testing Tactile Sensibility.

Miss M. A. Ennor, 116 Jubilee Road, Southsea.

Patchwork, and Appliance for Cutting Shapes.

Miss Nicholson. 41 Albyn Road, St. John's, London.

String Bag.

"CONFERENCE SUNDAY," JULY 2nd.

Special services were held in the various Churches and Chapels of Exeter and according to arrangements the pulpits were occupied by blind clergy, while the musical portion of the services was taken by blind Organists.

At the Cathedral in the morning appropriate reference was made to the Conference by the Dean, the Rt. Rev. the Bishop of Marlborough. He based his discourse on the miracle of Christ restoring sight to the blind (John VII. 58-59 and John IX. 1-7).

The Delegates were specially invited to attend the afternoon service at the Cathedral when a sermon was preached by Prebendary Martin of Exmouth.

The voluntary at the conclusion of the service was played by a blind Organist, Mr. T. G. Osborn, F.R.C.O., of Oxford.

By the courtesy of the Dean and Chapter, and the Canon in residence, the Cathedral pulpit in the evening was occupied by the Rev. C. E. Bolam (Rector of St. Mary Magdalene, Lincoln), and the voluntary at the conclusion of the service was again played by a blind Organist, Mr. H. C. Warrilow, F.R.C.O., of Oxford.

The following is a list of the blind Preachers and Organists who officiated at the services:—

CHURCHES.

Church.	Preacher.	Organist.
Cathedral	Rev. C. E. Bolam (Evening)	Mr. T. G. Osborn, F.R.C.O. (Afternoon) Mr. H. C. Warrilow, F.R.C.O. (Evening)
St. David's	Rev. J. H. Gordon-Smith (Morning)	Mr. A. Robins, A.R.C.O.
St. Michael's ...	Rev. G. C. Pope (Evening)	Mr. H. C. Souter, A.R.C.O.
St. Sidwell's ...		Mr. H. C. Warrilow, F.R.C.O.
St. Leonard's ...	Rev. A. Tansey ...	
St. Thomas'	Rev. C. E. Bolam (Morn.) Rev. J. H. Gordon-Smith (Evening)	Mr. H. E. Platt
Emanuel		Mr. F. W. Priest, F.R.C.O.
St. Mary Major ...	Rev. F. B. Dowdeswell	Mr. T. G. Osborn, F.R.C.O.
St. James'		Mr. W. G. Oke, A.R.A.M.
Bedford	Rev. G. F. Whittleton (Morning)	Mr. C. E. Johns
St. Stephen's ...		Mr. G. C. Lewis, A.R.C.O.
St. Lawrence ...		Mr. A. Edwards
St. Edmund's ...	Rev. G. C. Pope (Morning)	
St. Mary Arches ...		Miss E. Lucas, F.R.C.O.
St. Petrock's ...	Rev. G. F. Whittleton (Evening)	

CHAPELS.

Chapel.	Preacher.	Organist.
Southernhay Congregational	Rev. J. P. Lear ...	Mr. F. Watling, F.R.C.O.
South Street Baptist...	Rev. W. H. J. Page	Mr. P. Keily, A.R.C.O.
Mint Wesleyan ...		Mr. J. R. Crowley, A.R.C.O.
Southernhay Wesleyan		Mr. A. Stericker, L.R.A.M.
St. Sidwell's Wesleyan	Rev. E. George ...	Mr. Victor Spanner, MUS. BAC., F.R.C.O.
St. Thomas United Methodist	Mr. Jones (Morning) Mr. Siddall (Evening)	
Heavitree Congregational	Rev. W. H. J. Page	

MONDAY, JULY 3rd (Forenoon).

OPENING OF EXHIBITION.

The opening ceremony at the Exhibition was performed at noon by the Mayor, Mr. A. T. Loram. His Worship and the Sheriff of Exeter (Mr. J. G. Owen) wore their robes and chains of office, the Mayor being accompanied by the Mayoress, Mrs. A. T. Loram. The members of the City Council present were, Messrs. Depree, C. E. Rowe, Peters, Stocker, Sydney Herbert, Challice, Glanfield, Vicary, Guest, Algar, Cornwell, Evans, Gayton and Mansfield. with the City Marshal, Mr. Rackwood Cocks. The Town Clerk (Mr. Lloyd Parry) was also present, with officials of the Council, while others on the platform were Mr. Sebastian C. Snow, who, as President of the West of England Institution for the Blind and Chairman of the Local Conference Committee, presided; the Rev. David Young (Mayor's Chaplain), the Rev. J. Hendy Cock (Sheriff's Chaplain), Mr. H. J. Wilson, Chairman of the General Conference Committee; Mr. C. M. Collingwood, Honorary General Secretary; Mr. Alrik Lundberg (Sweden), Mr. Kruger (South Africa), Mr. Langridge Lane, Rev. W. H. Parkhouse, Mr W. Cutcliffe Knill, Honorary Local Secretary; and several Conference Delegates.

Mr. Sebastian Snow, in asking the Mayor to declare the Exhibition open, said it was very gratifying that such an assembly was taking place in Exeter this year.

The Mayor said he had much pleasure in welcoming to Exeter the members of the International Conference on the Blind. He hoped the Delegates' visit would be of great benefit to the object which they had in view, and also, that their debates would be very instructive to the City. This was the Third Triennial Conference, and as the two previous ones were held in cities very much bigger than their own city. Exeter had been honoured by the delegates coming there on this occasion. The City would endeavour to give them a right hearty welcome, hoping that the Conference would result in that good which was looked

for and deserved. From what he had read he gathered that the deliberate and careful training of the Blind in Schools began about 120 years ago, and he was glad to know that as early in the last century as 1834, the City of Exeter founded the Institution which was now in their midst on St. David's Hill.

When they remembered how much the deprivation of sight meant to those who met with that misfortune, and how during the early years of life, the eye was the chief window to the mind and soul, he was sure there was nobody that did not wish for the utmost to be done for the Blind, even at the cost of the State, when otherwise it was not obtainable. They would wish to make up for the deficiency of the Blind by providing them with the very best care and instruction that could possibly be given, but he took it that it was not a continuous flow of charity that was asked for on behalf of the Blind, but that real assistance which would enable those unfortunate ones to earn their own living, at least, to a very large extent. As a member of the Local Authority he could speak for his colleagues by saying they were looking forward to learning much, as a result of this Conference, as how best to deal from a philanthropic and economic point of view with those suffering from this misfortune. He found that in this land 25,000 persons were totally blind, and it was a great regret to know that nearly one third of that number were in workhouses, where they would not be, if, with the coming of their affliction, they had been taught the means of partial maintenance. It surprised him—he had no idea of it—that 400 out of every 1,000 would have been free from blindness if care had been taken in their early days. A paper on this important subject was amongst those for discussion at the Conference, namely, the one on Ophthalmia Neonatorum, which he was sure would be of great interest, and would have their best attention. The fact that one person in ten of those who are blind became so through ignorance or inattention at birth revealed a state of things, which, as a nation, they must at once resolve to prevent. That very much could be done by the Blind was proved by a long list of famous men and women who had suffered from the affliction, and he need only mention the great Milton, the great Swiss naturalist, Huber, Fawcett, a late Postmaster General, and last, but not least, the writer, Helen Keller. Concluding, the Mayor again wished the delegates a useful week, and then declared the Exhibition open.

Mr. H. J. Wilson moved a vote of thanks to the Mayor, and said the members of the Conference were most grateful to his Worship and the

Corporation for attending. It was especially gratifying to have the chief Magistrate present on such an occasion, because it was felt that it was very difficult indeed to convince the public of what the Blind are capable of doing, unless Exhibitions like this were held. He hoped, therefore, the inhabitants of Exeter would attend this one during the present week. It was also difficult to find profitable employment for the Blind, and that difficulty was intensified in the case of those who became blind in adult life. Mr. Wilson mentioned that the New York Association for the Blind recently headed a list of employments by advertising a blind barber, but he did not think that even he, anxious as he was to help the Blind, could be persuaded to sit in that barber's chair. Some years ago he heard of a blind barber in Devonshire. He had a good report of him, but the following sentence in the letter dashed to the ground all hopes of this being a suitable employment for the Blind: "He manages to shave his old customers very well because he knows the shape of their faces, but new customers never come a second time."

Mr. Illingworth of Henshaw's Blind Asylum, Manchester, seconded, and said the Mayor struck the key-note when be remarked that it was not empty sympathy or charity which was asked for, but employment. The Mayor also referred to some form of State Aid, and he (the speaker) felt that such a happening as his Worship's presence that day was one of the first steps towards securing State Aid through Municipal action, not State Aid in the form of pensions but in the form of orders for goods made by the Blind from authorities like Guardians County Councils, and Town Councils. It was not an unmixed blessing that this Conference met at Exeter, for it would require strength of will on the part of delegates to attend conscientiously to the meetings when such superb attractions were all round them.

The Sheriff proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman. He said that Mr. Illingworth had paid a charming compliment to the beauties of Exeter, but he hoped the delegates would have plenty of time to enjoy the scenery and hospitality of Exeter besides attending to their business. One's first feeling in connection with the Blind was one of sympathy, but looking around at the work on view at this Exhibition, and considering the excellent work done at the Exeter Institution for the Blind, that feeling of sympathy merged into one of admiration—admiration for the skill shown by the Blind in the production of such

beautiful articles, attaining, as they did, to a standard of craft and of art which many of those who were blessed with all their senses—or thought they were—were unable to attain.

Mr. Depree seconded, and the vote was carried with applause.

Mr. Snow replied, and expressed the hope that the Exhibition would stimulate interest in the work of the Exeter Institution for the Blind.

REPORT.

MONDAY, JULY 3rd, 1911.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

CHAIRMAN : The Rt. Rev. The Lord Bishop of Marlborough.

MR. SEBASTIAN C. SNOW (Chairman of Local Conference Committee) : Ladies and gentlemen, in the absence of our President, Sir Thomas Acland, through the illness of Lady Acland, which I am sure we all very much deplore, we have asked the Lord Bishop of Marlborough to take the chair ; and although he has engagements throughout the day and can only be with us for half an hour, he has consented to do so. I propose that the Lord Bishop of Marlborough takes the chair. (Applause).

CHAIRMAN : Ladies and gentlemen, I am here, as you all know, at a moment's notice—an old dried faggot to stop a green gap. But I will do the best I can in the short time before me. The first thing we have to do is to sing. [The National Anthem was then sung.] I will now ask you to join me in prayer. [Prayer was then offered by the Chairman.] The next thing I have to do is a very grateful task ; I have to welcome most heartily, in the name of all Christian folk in Exeter, the ladies and gentlemen attending this Conference, seeking to advance the interests of the Blind. I endeavoured yesterday in the Cathedral to place the work of the Christian Church among the Blind upon the highest level that I could, in taking a passage in which our Lord deals with the blind, and especially in reference to the fourth verse, which, according to a very early manuscript, ought to read "We" instead of "I." "*We*" must do the work, not "I," in which our blessed Lord associates the Church with Himself in work such as this. This alone is sufficient to make you understand why I so heartily welcome to our City of Exeter those coming from various

parts of the world, as well as those of our own land, to do their best to prepare for the future better work for the blind—good and great although that work has been in the past. I do welcome you all most heartily, and wish to make an apology; I am sorry that I should be the only representative of the Dean and Chapter present to-day, but, unfortunately, the first week in July is a difficult one for clergy in Exeter and other parts of England to make arrangements which will fit in with their own engagements. because it is the week of Convocation, and every member of my Chapter, with the exception of one, is a member of Convocation and does his duty elsewhere; and even members of Chapters cannot be in two places at once. I am sure, however, that they are here in sympathy and in spirit; and so too it may be said of the Bishop.

Well, having said these few words of hearty welcome, and expressed my great regret that you should not have a worthier advocate, I want to make, with your permission, a few remarks as one who has been engaged among the Blind for many a year; who for thirteen years ministered to a dear mother who was blind, and during all that time never once murmured at the will of God; and having of course, in a long parochial life extending over half a century, been brought into touch with the work among the Blind. I have to say a few words of hearty congratulation on the programme to be discussed. I do not think it would be possible to draw up a more suitable one, or one which is likely to lead to better consequences. The first paper, for instance, should prove a most interesting one. I will not intrude upon Miss Austin by saying anything about her subject. I would like, however, to point out to you that nothing is of greater importance to the Blind than a proper selection of books. To put a wrong book in a blind man's hand is a damnable work; to put the right is a blessed one, because you must remember that these libraries are the avenues by means of which we communicate with those who cannot see, and give them some idea of the beauties and glories of the natural world. How good it is to place within their reach those grand descriptions of Nature which have been so helpful to us! How good to place in their hands not only the literature, but also the other side—the moral, the intellectual, and the spiritual. And I feel sure you will all see that those books are to them the avenne through which they acquire the knowledge of God's work and deeds. How important it is to thoroughly discuss and always keep in our minds the need of improving the literature of the blind and their libraries.

Then I turn to the second subject which you will discuss. It is the Teachers of the Blind, their training, qualifications, and reasonable prospects of employment. You can all see how necessary it all is. If the Blind are to be rightly taught the teachers must not only have the necessary qualifications, but we must so arrange in dealing with this particular subject of education that the teachers shall have reasonable employment offered to them in this blessed work.

Then we come to the next paper. Can anything be more interesting to one caring for the Blind, or more encouraging, than the subject of this paper? A retrospect of the good, holy and loving work of the past, and suggestions for the future. Not only gratitude for the past, but hope—blessed hope—for a yet wider field of interest and yet greater blessings upon the work, following upon further knowledge of how we are to work; and more than that, we can trust upon Him whom we must trust, light of the work if we are to be light to others.

The next subject is perhaps the most important one. I have been a Parish Priest for more than half a century, and have been brought into active touch with the deaf and dumb, the blind, and so on, and one of the most difficult problems is not so much the work itself—I think you will all recognise this—as the *after* work. What are we to do with these poor women, and what are we to do with the Blind? Perhaps there is nothing more sad in the field of work for the Blind than to know that many of those to whom we have anxiously taught better things sink back into the ranks of the mere blind beggar. It is not an easy problem. What employment are we to give them? I trust I shall not be mistaken when I say that I have worked among workmen all my life and cannot help saying this: if the workman in his full strength, able to seek for work, able to go to the Colonies and seek fresh fields of labour, if he is patiently listened to when he demands work, what is the position of the blind? Surely they have a greater claim upon all employers of labour, and emphatically upon the State itself. Therefore I say this discussion is of very great importance indeed.

The next paper is one of a different character—"The requirements of social life at home and in society, and the best means of securing it." This is to be dealt with by a lady who has the very fullest knowledge of the matter with which she will have to deal. It is not an easy subject, but it is a very deep subject. How much more we might get out of the blind members of our families, if they were trained to be prepared to minister. The home influence of the blind might be

the very highest influence of the home, whereas it is sometimes the very worst. And if this is true of the home, how much more true is it of society? How much good might be done if we could send out, as the fruits of our work, men prepared to deal carefully and thoughtfully and independently with the great social questions. How good for the blind to be taught to think and to deal with those great social questions with which our conscience is so sorely crying out! And what a good thing it would be to have more of those blind men—(you know some here in Exeter—you know one at least)—who by the influence of their lives, although themselves without light, have been able to bring light to their social circle. May I tell you a story of my life which will illustrate the possible influence, of the highest possible order, of a blind man over those with whom he is brought into contact. I think it is cognisant to the subject we are discussing. You will pardon a garrulous old man for a moment, I am sure. I have not yet done my duty, because I have still several minutes to spare. More than half a century ago I was a hard-worked curate in a rough parish in Salisbury; there there lived a man who taught me more spiritual truth than I have ever learnt since. He was the most perfect gentleman I ever knew; one of the most Christian men I have known; one whose conversation and whose whole life were always edifying; only a pauper, with 3s. a week, wearing the blue coat and the white metal buttons which at that time was the uniform worn by paupers. He had been born blind, and had never seen one gleam of that light which is so helpful to us all in our lives—moral, spiritual, and material. He had never from his birth been without pain, having been born with a subtle disease of the spine. There he was in my parish, between fifty and sixty years of age. I shall never forget the beauty of his eyes, though he never saw with them; the sweet face, the beautiful up-look; the constant reference to higher things when I met him. A pauper—3s. a week—a pauper's coat—always in pain—blind from childhood! One day—it was in mid May—I was passing from one part of the parish to another, and I had to cross a piece of ground called Green Croft Public Ground, separated from the road by posts about three feet high, with chains passing from post to post. This was his favourite place, and there William White (I fancy I can see him now) was walking, guiding himself by his stick upon the chains between the posts. It had been a wet May. The ground was soft, and he did not hear me. I came upon him suddenly, and said, "William,"—— But first I must tell you that I had seen something else. When I came within a few yards of him he took off his hat with

most humble reverence, and looking up to the bright May sun, said, "Thank God!" and so remained with bare brow looking up towards the heavens; and then, with a change of countenance quite different, a second time he said "Thank God!" I was close to him, and put my hand on him, and said, "Why do you thank God?" He started, and said, "I did not know you were there." He blushed like a girl. "Why did you say 'Thank God!'" I repeated. He replied, "Mr. Earle, I was just thanking God that He let His bright, warm sunshine fall upon my poor old face; how good He is." "Ah," I said, "but you thanked God a second time; why was that?" "Oh," he said, "I thought that others could see what I can only feel, and I thought of the blessedness of those who can see the beautiful light." Now, dear brethren, are you thankful for your great advantages? I learnt a lesson then that I have never since forgotten. Time after time, when the demon of discontent has beset me, I have thought of that man and his "Thank God!" A pauper—ever in pain, blind from birth—thanked God. Well, my friends, you may all of you perhaps say, "What a garrulous old gentleman that was." But I hope you will not only have listened to my words with which I have tried to recommend the programme, but will also, for the enlightenment of your old or young hearts, sometimes remember William White, and thank God. (Applause.)

I have some difficulty myself in reading your programme, but I have no doubt it will go right in the hands of others. It is now my great pleasure to ask Miss Austin to read her paper.

ON LIBRARIES FOR THE BLIND.

By E. W. AUSTIN.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

When the compilation of this paper was entrusted to my unworthy self, I warned your Committee that, while realising the value of a record of what has been done already in the direction of Libraries for the Blind, I yet believed that, at a Conference of experts such as this, subjects of controversy and progress were even more necessary for discussion, and that I was anxious to put before you the ideal of uniting the existing resources—in other words, the establishment of a *National Library for the Blind.*

(It should be understood that the words "National Library" do not refer in this connection to the Incorporated National Lending Library for the Blind.)

The record of work done has been made in the table which precedes this paper, which, with your permission, shall remain unread while I pass on—

First, to make a brief summary of the Libraries now in existence ;

Then to state the defects of the present system ;

And next to outline a scheme by which those defects might be remedied.

SUMMARY.

There are six different kinds of Libraries already in existence. We have—

(*a*) Libraries in the schools required for the education and recreation of the pupils, not available to the outside blind.

(*b*) Libraries connected with institutions and workshops, available to the workers and sometimes to the outside blind.

(*c*) The Libraries of the Home-Teaching Societies and the Societies for the Outdoor Blind, their Scottish equivalent. Some of these are of considerable size, especially in Scotland.

(*d*) Embossed sections in various Public Libraries, available to the local residents only.

(*e*) The unique Oxford Library, which consists principally of books beyond the range of the average reader, and which was originally intended for the local students, but is available to *bona fide* students all over the country.

(*f*) Some general Libraries. These are :—

(1) The Manchester and Salford Blind Aid Society and the Northern Counties Society, whence books are lent to outside Institutions, Public Libraries, and to outside subscribers, as well as gratis to the local blind.

(2) The London Home Teaching Society, whence books are lent to outside subscribers, as well as gratis to those visited by the Teachers.

(3) The National Library for the Blind, whence books are lent to Institutions, Public Libraries, and to all those who will pay a subscription and to many who cannot.

There are in addition some specialised Libraries which do not fall under any of the above heads, *e.g.*, the Brighton Memorial Collection of Moon books presented by Moon's Society, the Sunbeam Mission's Library for Children, the Catholic Truth Society's Library, and that of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

This summary would not be complete without some mention of our Publishing Houses.

The principal sources for obtaining books printed by machinery are :—

The British and Foreign Blind Association, which during the year 1910 produced 57 large Braille volumes and 23 pieces of music, besides 46,550 Braille pamphlets and 97,306 newspapers and magazines. The total number of plates stereotyped was 5,820. The "Braille Daily Mail" is printed here.

Moon's Society.—In 1910 this invaluable institution produced 52 volumes, besides the Moon Magazine; 9,000 embossed books were sent out during the year; the total number of plates stereotyped was 4,000. Librarians will all acknowledge the debt we owe on behalf of our older readers to the Moon system.

The Royal Blind Asylum, West Craigmillar, in 1910, produced 15 Braille volumes and 27 pieces of music, besides the "Craigmillar Harp" and "Hora Jucunda." The Braille magazines—"Channels of Blessing," "The Church Messenger," and "The King's Messenger"—are printed here.

Books are also printed by machinery by the Northern Counties' Blind Society, which in 1910 produced several volumes in Braille and Moon types, besides the magazine "Dawn"; at Henshaw's Blind Asylum, to which we are indebted for two useful musical text-books; and at the Hampstead Blind School, where three magazines have been printed, as well as four volumes of fiction. Mention should be made of the "Weekly Summary," the first weekly newspaper for the blind, edited and printed by Miss E. R. Scott.

It is interesting to state that the enquiry as to readers' preferences in the matter of stereotyped or manuscript books has resulted in a very small majority for hand-written work. Many declined to express a preference.

It will be seen, therefore, that a very great deal is being done in the manufacture and distribution of books for the

blind, and when I go on in a few minutes to point out some of the faults that may be found with our present system of independent Libraries, it will be in no carping spirit. Considering the difficulties of production, of circulation, the eternal anxiety of raising money in small sums, one marvels at the ground already covered, and one pays admiring tribute to the labours of those who have built up these Libraries all over the country. Roughly speaking, there must be about 70,000 volumes in the Libraries of Great Britain. Many of these, of course, are duplicates of printed works, some of hand-written work; but the fact remains that the country possesses some 70,000 volumes of more or less value.

Now there is already some form of co-operation between many of the existing Libraries. The Public Libraries (very wisely) in many cases subscribe to the circulating Libraries of Manchester, North Shields or London, rather than build up a Braille department for themselves, which, as Mr. Dougan of Oxford says, would be a great waste of material considering the limited number of borrowers and the limited number of books in the market.

Home Teaching Societies, Schools and Institutions often supplement their collections by periodical consignments of books from these same sources, much in the way that a small seaside Library in the "sighted" world belongs to Mudie's for the benefit of its patrons. This unformulated understanding, or affiliation by mutual interest does exist, faintly foreshadowing the possibilities and advantages of co-operation.

But, there is no organised scheme of working together, and so there is undeniable overlapping and waste, and, in spite of all the praiseworthy efforts expended, there is not one adequate Library for the Blind—no, not one. Yet the necessary resources are there, only waiting for us to gather them together into one mighty whole.

It is surely unnecessary here to point out the need of a circulating Library to the Blind. Even to the more opulent among them an adequate private library is an impossible luxury, as space alone would forbid any but the smallest collection in consequence of the bulk of the volumes.

Do you realise, I wonder, that the largest of all our collections, the National Library of London, only comprises some 14,000 volumes, which, taking the average book to be in four volumes, means a little over 3,000 books—a creditable collection for a middle-class private house.

And still we say that reading means so much to the blind; it is so necessary, for their education, their recreation, is often their only channel of communication with the outside world!

DEFECTS OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM.

Let me now give you some of the defects of the present system.

(1) *The Poverty of the Existing Collections.*

Could a list be made of all that the country possesses in the way of literature, although numerically large the number of duplicates we should find would, I fear, reduce our national catalogue to an inconsiderable document. When the fairly large proportion of trash had been weeded out, not to speak of the ill-written and dirty books which are fit only for the bonfire, the result would be far from imposing.

(2) *Comparative inaccessibility of those books which do exist.*

This has two disadvantages:—

(*a*) You will not need me to tell you of the expenses of book production, whether by hand or machine, and that, in consequence, embossed books should never lie idle—they should be used to benefit the greatest possible number of readers, replaced when necessary, and burnt. You know as

well as I that one of the crying defects of the present system is that it is impossible to know what is obtainable in Braille, and that valuable books are sometimes hidden away on the shelves of local libraries, never moved, save let us hope to be dusted, from year's end to year's end. If put into circulation these would form the joy and solace of many an isolated reader. This is, of course, not so important in the case of stereotyped books which are easily reproduced, but even these should be *used.* I have frequently enquired at Public Libraries, for instance, in various parts of the country as to the demand for embossed books, and have been told, "Oh, yes, we have a hundred volumes or so, but no one asks for them." Such books have often been bought at some outlay by a generous committee and, having been read by the local blind, are no longer of any use in that place as blind people seem rarely to re-read a book. Possibly memory accounts for this; they read, mark, learn, and do not forget. Had we a central Library and an organised system of exchange, such books having been read in one town could be passed on to another, and so on till worn out. Public Libraries can be our best friends in the distribution of embossed literature if they are only shown the way. It is so great a pity that they should be discouraged by an experiment doomed by its very nature to failure. In schools, also, Mr. Stone tells me, interesting books have to be prepared for students, which, when the special need for them has passed, could be advantageously circulated among general readers.

(*b*) In the second place it frequently happens that readers, and even institutions, not content with their local library, apply for books also from one of the larger libraries, which would be totally unnecessary were the libraries affiliated, as by that means the whole of the embossed literature of the country would be open to every reader.

(3) *Universal Catalogue.*

The next defect is the obvious corollary of the above—*the impossibility of a comprehensive catalogue*, a lack which in the past has sometimes even entailed the publication of duplicates by the different publishing firms, which entirely prevents readers from knowing all that there is to be had in embossed type or where it can be obtained. It also makes it impossible to prevent duplication by voluntary writers. It seems almost unnecessary to comment on this most important point. There has hardly been a dissentient voice as to the need for a universal catalogue except on the score of expense.

Given the enormous cost of producing embossed literature even when stereoptyped, and the labour and devotion of those who volunteer their services in hand-written work, it is surely obvious that such work should be used to the utmost and that no overlapping of labour should be allowed. Yet that such overlapping does occur is undeniable. The same book is written over and over again by kindly souls with infinite pains, and this has even happened when the book is in stereotype. The argument that many copies of certain books are needed, which is urged in extenuation of this wastefulness, is to me no argument. If second copies are required, let the blind, who want the work, make them ; if third and fourth and fifth copies are necessary—let the work be printed ! We owe it to those who give their leisure and their energy so bountifully to brailling for the blind to see to it that every second of that leisure, every ounce of that energy is made to tell ; and we owe it to the publishing houses of this country to take fullest possible advantage of the service they offer.

(4) *The lack of any organised system of training voluntary or even paid blind copyists.*

Libraries obtain their books at present from two sources :—

1. The Publishing Firms.
2. Voluntary Writers.

The latter has been up till now by far the most productive source, as by hand it is possible to produce any book, no matter how long and how few readers require it, while the printer must always weigh the probable demand for a book before going to the expense of the plates, which initial outlay, at the present price of stereotyped work, is never recouped, however great a number of copies may be sold.

We buy all that we can get of printed books, and we listen eagerly to those who tell us that their number will shortly increase and that it will be possible to bring out small editions; but the fact is that the voluntary writer is our chief stand-by in the stocking of our shelves, and is likely to remain so as long as our Libraries depend on a satisfying variety of books rather than on a large number of copies of the same work.

Printed books are generally correct. Too high a tribute of praise and admiration cannot be paid to the progress lately made by our publishing firms, especially at the British and Foreign Blind Association, where Mr. Stainsby has made a revolution in printing for the blind.

Mr. Stainsby tells me that he hopes shortly to discover a method of quickly reproducing hand-work, and that he has already reached the point of turning paper into metal. This will increase the importance of our voluntary writers and their training.

In technical accuracy a Braille sheet should be able to challenge comparison with a page of sighted print. How many errors would we allow per page in the books we read? The printer has to turn out workmanlike work, and we, we can for love of the blind do what he does for money. The educative value to the blind of good work should never be

out of our minds; whence we cannot too carefully place before them those Braille equivalents of significant print uses which the rules require and which the best current Braille exhibits. Print distinctions mean much to us, their Braille equivalents should mean much to the blind. One should seek to represent best print arrangements, to give a writer's thought as perfect a Braille setting as possible.

That volunteer Braillists, when given the chance, gladly qualify themselves for the high standard so raised, is amply proved by the numbers who have undergone rigorous training during the past year at the London Library and obtained their Certificates before beginning to write.

Now it is a sad fact that hand or typewritten work is frequently incorrect. It is not the fault of the writers; they have never been shown the supreme importance of accuracy, they have never been taught to develop a "Braille conscience." It is not the fault of the Libraries which accept books so brailled; they have no staff to train novices or correct their books when written, and their need of books is so great that they are generally thankful to take what they can get. In consequence the country is flooded with bad Braille which is not one whit easier and far less satisfying to write than good Braille.

And so I close my case for the prosecution.

A REMEDY AND AN ORGANIZATION.

Now it seems to me that we have only to recognize the fact that we all *do want* a National Library for the Blind for it to take shape almost immediately. It is only a question of joining the ends where they do not quite meet, of recognising and marshalling our forces and materials, and in a very short time our National Library will be there for all to rejoice in and feel proud of having produced. Such a Library would take years to build up were it entrusted to one individual society, however competent and willing, if it

ever did become that ideal which I am striving to put before you. The Library we want should be representative, fed from all parts of the country as well as used by all parts of the country. It should be the result of united and intelligent effort, sheltered and helped forward by all, and ——we have just the right organization to our hand.

All these smaller Libraries scattered about the country with their Committees and Librarians who know so well the difficulties and possibilities of Libraries for the Blind; all the Public Libraries with their adequate buildings and their trained staffs; all the Blind Institutions with their need of special books and their pupils leaving school, who would be so glad of a little copying to eke out a precarious income; if all these would only take the scheme under their care and think for it, plan for it, use their influence for it, we could start our National Library to-morrow with scarcely a change in the existing machinery, by merely establishing a sort of "Clearing House" as has been done by the railways.

AN ADEQUATE BUILDING.

It is true that I do not see how the National Library can come into being without an adequate building which would probably need to be situated in London as being most central. However, let us once decide that we need a Central Library, that the scheme is desirable, and even this difficulty can be overcome. At the worst some disused hall or chapel might be rented. Hardly does it seem too optimistic to hope that in this charitable age some philanthropist will be found to endow our blind world with what has been so freely bestowed upon the sighted. Nor is it impossible that eventually, when the need is proved, such an institution might be subsidised by a paternal Government.

AFFILIATION OF LOCAL LIBRARIES.

It should be understood that there is no suggestion that

all the Libraries in the country should pack up their books and send them off to London, there to be catalogued and distributed afresh as soon as the resultant chaos had subsided. I know of no one in London or elsewhere capable or desirous of undertaking such a task!

Local Libraries would retain their collections as they found it needful, only sending to the Central Library to enrich the general store any valuable books they might not have in constant use.

But, instead of continuing to produce books by isolated hand labour, they should induce their writers to join a National Band, undergo training, and to write for the Central Library, whereby they would be working for *the whole Blind population of this country and not for a tiny section of it.* For new books such Libraries would subscribe to the Central Library, thus throwing open to their readers the widest range of literature from which to choose, instead of leaving them dependent on the new books obtainable by local effort. Their annual subscriptions, which should be made as low as possible, would form part of the resources of the Central Library, and would cost the local Society far less than the production of any sufficient number of new books. Gradually their old stock would wear out; it would then be possible, if necessary, to renew it from the stereotyped works, or better still to take a larger consignment of volumes from the Central Library, as these could be exchanged when read.

Where possible, the local Public Library should be induced to take this responsibility of providing the local blind with literature. And by this I do not for one instant suggest that they should do it instead of the local Society. No; what we want is the Public Library Committee to bear the expense of subscribing for and housing the books, while at the same time they give the Home Teachers and other suitable local organisations every facility for using

and distributing them as if they were their own. I would go further and say that in towns where there is no such local organisation every effort should be made to engage a home teacher to act as a sort of Hon. Advisory Librarian to the Public Library, and to take the books, when necessary, to the people in their own homes. Local charity, being relieved by the Public Library of the need to provide books or house them, could probably afford to employ a blind man to do this work, which would have the additional advantage of creating a new source of livelihood for educated blind men.

It really only needs the cordial co-operation of the local Blind Societies to make the distribution of books to the outside blind through the Public Libraries a complete success. It is already in effective operation in several towns. For look how it relieves the pressure of that eternal difficulty of funds. The Public Library Committee pays a sufficient subscription for the books, and bears the cost of carriage. This not only relieves the local Societies from all expense, but it subsidises the central library—a beautiful example of indirect state-aid!

There is another point of view. In all this, it is after all, the blind reader who is to be considered. Besides throwing open to him a wide field of literature, the method has this added advantage: it is the one way in which we can put the blind on an absolute equality with the seeing. All the rest of our Societies are charities. At the Public Library the blind man has his rights like everybody else.

It may be asked what advantages the local Societies and Institutions will derive from affiliation with a central body. So many, in reply to my questionnaire, have given their voice in favour of affiliation that it cannot be only to myself that the benefits are clear. Some of them have been already mentioned.

Local Libraries, instead of their own comparatively

small stock, would have the whole of the Braille and Moon literature of this country at their call. Instead of having to provide storage room for an ever-increasing number of rarely used books, they could keep a small permanent stock and have a stream of fresh literature continually flowing through their hands.

Their rents and their necessary staff would therefore not increase.

Their writers would be trained for them, and they would only have to make known at the Centre their need for some special book for it to be brailled as soon as possible.

As representatives of a great national scheme, they would have an added importance and influence, and would probably be welcomed in the deliberations of Committees of such Public Libraries as made literature for the Blind a part of their programme.

Schools requiring special books quickly brailled for examination work would have the national army of voluntary writers at their command, so giving their students much-needed facilities. In addition, the wider reading necessary for the education of the blind child could be obtained in continual relays.

The Committee of the Manchester and Salford Blind Aid Society have urged the following points against affiliation :—

(1) Delay in transit.

This difficulty could be met by a system of alternate hampers. The first hamper would not be returned to the Clearing-house until the second had been despatched.

(2) Loss of local voluntary workers.

This seems unlikely, if the case is put fairly to them by their local society. They would surely prefer that their work should be used to the full and be made available to all

who wanted it? The blind of each writer's locality might easily be given the first reading of books produced in that district, if desired.

(3) Local financial support would decrease.

It is difficult to see why this should be so. The Library would still be a local Library, only extended by affiliation with all those working on the same lines. In these days of scientific charity, such a guarantee against waste would tend to inspire confidence.

(4) The cost of carriage.

Even when added to the annual subscription to a Central Library, this could not equal the cost of producing, binding, housing, and handling large quantities of books. It would vary according to the number of volumes required.

(5) The loss of Control over the Local Library.

It seems to me that, on the contrary, this scheme offers Home Rule to each local Society with a voice in the extension of the National Library.

Mr. Illingworth and one or two others have urged that the danger of infection would be enormously increased by the passing on of the books from one neighbourhood to another. It is probable that such risk would be diminished, rather. How many of our present Libraries take any precaution in this matter? I have not enquired, but I know that it is only within the past two years that the Incorporated National Library has been in a position to fumigate by the latest approved methods every book returned, thus sterilising possible germs. Public Libraries are notified every day by the Sanitary Authorities of infectious illness in every street in their town, and adequate precautions are taken. Further, were the organisation above sketched out in working order, it would be possible in many cases to influence the careless to greater cleanliness, an influence difficult to exercise while the books are often sent, as at present, hither and thither

throughout the country with no real control over them in each district.

I have heard it said that the difficulties and cost of distribution would be insurmountable. Not so, if the Public Libraries as a body come to our aid, which they are far more likely to do if we, the Librarians of the Blind World, represent a National Institution. They bear cost of carriage and house the books. The Central Library could meet them by leaving their consignments with them for twelve months if required. The only obstacle at present is scarcity of copies. When our corps of blind writers is organised, we can duplicate whenever necessary and advise the publishing houses what could be most profitably stereotyped.

It is very lately that, in co-operation with Mr. Stainsby and Miss Heywood, we approached the railways with a view to obtaining a reduction on carriage of blind literature. We were unsuccessful, but we do not despair. Other countries have free porterage; we had to wait many years and make many efforts for our reduced postage. Again, there is no doubt that a powerful organisation such as a Universal Library would have weightier influence with the Railway Managers' Conference in a few years' time than has been the case this year.

It has been advanced that by inducing the Public Libraries to take charge of the books we are jeopardising the employment of Home Teachers. This seems improbable, as we should only be trying to increase the Library at the disposal of their readers, and, as was shown above, a more general employment of this class is advocated and indeed rendered possible and necessary by this scheme.

LEAGUE OF VOLUNTARY WORKERS.

Next, it would be necessary to have at the Central Library a complete system of registering and training the voluntary writers by whose help a satisfactory Central Library would be built up, upon which local Societies

would draw for their readers. Roughly estimated, there are about 800 people writing Braille in this country as well as a paid band of blind writers. There is no lack of material. What we need is a recognised centre from which volunteers, blind and sighted, and paid blind workers can be so trained and overlooked that the books produced by them may challenge comparison with the best printed books. An adequate staff of correctors and teachers to train the writers would be necessary. Valuable works, seldom transcribed for local libraries, yet not infrequently desired by them, could be undertaken by experienced braillists.

UNIVERSAL CATALOGUE.

Lastly, there would be the annual publication of a Universal Catalogue giving full particulars of all that was available in embossed types and where to ask for and get it.

LOCAL REPRESENTATION.

The whole idea is, of course, unworkable without the aid of the local Societies and those interested in the blind. It is not possible from a distant centre to oversee all the details of such a scheme. The whole country would necessarily be divided into districts. The local Society, or may be the Union Secretary of each district, would seem to be indicated as the ideal representative of the Central Library in that district, or the agent for finding a Local Honorary Secretary to undertake the duties.

These would be as follows :—

(1) To organise the provision of literature for all those who need it from the Central Library, either through the Public Library, the local Society, or, if none exist, direct to the individual.

(2) To enlist a band of voluntary workers to be trained by the Central Library Staff.

(3) To raise a local fund to pay local blind to copy the books of the Central Library for the purpose of making sufficient duplicate copies. This is an object that makes a searching appeal. People generally prefer giving work to giving money. There is no overestimating the boon this work of Braille copying can be to the blind, especially to those who are blind and deaf, who have often no other resources. The pecuniary benefit is great, but the moral benefit is far greater.

(4) To obtain funds if possible for the Central Library, as there will naturally be a continually increasing demand upon its resources, and it is but fair that the financial burden should be evenly distributed.

(5) To send in a list periodically of the books required by the local blind to assist them in their profession or trade, or of those which they may especially desire to read. This, of course, would not preclude the choice of other books for transcription.

CONCLUSION.

To conclude. We are told that it is far better to have several good Libraries than one Central Library. Possibly. What I have tried to show is that we have not one adequate Library ; that all our resources are needed to build up one really fine Library first ; later on, if needful, we can pass on to the creation of four or five duplicates throughout the country.

It is an interesting fact that on the continent France, Germany and Sweden claim to have already practical centralisation and to find it satisfactory. The details of their systems are not identical with this scheme, but the idea of the centralisation of resources is the same.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have done. I leave our National Library in your hands. Will you give your

approval to a scheme which has for its object to build up a sort of circulating British Museum for the Blind, where at least one copy of every work produced in Braille or Moon shall be deposited; where the blind and every one interested in the Blind will be able to apply for the best books or the best information as to how to obtain them; where such fine collections as the Moon Memorial Library will gravitate as a matter of course; where an accurate record can be kept of all work done; where writers will be trained to write good Braille; where that valuable and interesting document, a universal catalogue, will be no longer an imagination of Utopia, but a satisfactory and easily compiled reality; where, as I have said above, the whole of Braille literature will be accessible to every blind reader.

Our blind population is happily not so large but that this question can be dealt with in an adequate manner. All that we need is unselfishness, public spirit, and a united determination to overcome the initial difficulties.

It only remains for me to thank all those who have so generously replied to my enquiries and helped with the writing of this paper. I regret that their names are so many that it is impossible to enumerate them. You will find nearly all of them mentioned by implication in the list of Libraries given below.

LIST OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Where books are issued direct to the Blind, either from a permanent stock or through stock obtained by subscription to a Circulating Library for the Blind.

Note.—It has been found impossible to obtain sufficient data to give more detailed information in this list.

1. Aberdeen
2. Accrington
3. Ashton-under-Lyne
4. Aston Manor

5. Barrow-in-Furness
6. Belfast
7. Birmingham
8. Blackburn
9. Bolton
10. Bradford
11. Brighton
12. Bristol
13. Bury
14. Camberwell
15. Cambridge
16. Cardiff
17. Carlisle
18. Chester
19. Colne
20. Darlington
21. Darwen
22. Dewsbury
23. Dudley
24. Dundee
25. Eastbourne
26. Gateshead
27. Glasgow
28. Glossop
29. Greenwich
30. Hackney
31. Hammersmith
32. Halifax
33. Hove
34. Hyde
35. Islington
36. Leamington
37. Lincoln
38. Liverpool
39. Manchester
40. Middlesborough
41. Middleton
42. Newport
43. Norwich
44. Nottingham
45. Oldham
46. Oxford
47. Paisley
48. Penzance
49. Peterborough
50. Plymouth
51. Preston
52. Rawtenstall
53. Rochdale
54. Salisbury
55. St. Helens
56. Stepney
57. Stoke-on-Trent
58. Sunderland
59. Torquay
60. Wakefield
61. Walsall
62. West Ham
63. Worcester
64. York

List of Libraries for the Blind.

NOTE.—S.I.N.L.L.B. means Subscribes to Incorporated National Lending Library to the Blind.. S.M. & S.B.A.S. Manchester & Salford Blind Aid Society.

PAID LABOUR ALWAYS MEANS BLIND LABOUR.

Name of Institution.	Nature of Library	No. of Volumes.	No. of Readers.	Subscription or Carriage charged.	How Books acquired.	Catalogues.	If local Public Library interested.
Aberdeen Blind Society	Circulating in district	1500	160	None	Purchase	Braille and printed	Yes, embossed section
Accrington and District	,,	170 S.I.N.L.L.B. Some music	11	,,	,,	Printed	Yes, subsidises local Society
Armagh Asylum	For inmates	A few books only	12	,,	,,		No
Ashton-under-Lyne Society	Circulating in district	800 S.I.N.L.L.B.	30	,,	,,	,,	Yes, subsidises local Society
Belfast Workshops	,,	1250	60	Both where possible	Vol. and paid labour	Braille and printed	Yes, subscribes to I.N.L.L.B.
Belfast Home Mission	,,	175 and some music		None	Vol. and paid labour, purchase	Printed	,,
Birmingham Institution	,,	1000 and music from I.N.L.L.B.	200	,,	,,	None	Yes, embossed section, and subscribes I.N.L.L.B.
Bradford Institution	For inmates	450	36	,,	Purchase	Printed	Yes, subscribes to M. & S.B.A.S.
Bristol Home Teaching Scty.	Circulating in district	600	300	Sub. where possible	Vol. and paid labour, purchase	Braille and printed	Yes, subscribes to I.N.L.L.B.
Bristol School	For inmates	600	75	None	,,	Typewritten and Braille	Yes ,,

Name of Institution.	Nature of Library.	No. of Volumes.	No. of Readers.	Subscription or Carriage charged.	How Books acquired.	Catalogues.	If local Public Library interested.
Cheltenham Home Teaching Society	Circulating in district	600	20	None	Vol. and paid labour, purchase	None	No
Chester, etc., Home Teaching Society	Circulating in district	449	99	None	Some gifts. Purchased formerly by grant by Gardner's Trust	Printed and Hand	Yes, in Chester only
North Wales (Bangor) Home Teaching Society.	Circulating in district	1555	113	Subsr. Car. one way, 9; free, 102	Purchase. Gifts. Hand.	Printed	Not yet approached.
Colchester Home Teaching Society	,,	200 S.I.N.L.L.B.	36	None	Purchase		No
Colne Blind Teaching Scty.	,,					None	Yes, pays all expenses
Coventry Home Teaching Society	,,	100 S.I.N.L.L.B.	8	,,	,,	,,	No
Devonport & Western Counties Association	For inmates	90 and magazines		,,	,,	,,	,,
Devon (South) & Cornwall Society	,,			,,		Being revised	,,
Dublin Indigent Blind Scty.	,,	Miscellaneous S.I.N.L.L.B.	36	,,	Vol. labour	None	,,
Dublin, St. Joseph's School	,,	110 and some music	36	,,	Purchase	Printed	,,
Dublin, Richmond Institn.	,,	154 S.I.N.L.L.B.	16	,,	,,	None	,,
Dundee Outdoor Blind Scty.	Circulating in district	1042	67	,,	,,	Printed	Yes, sub. to I.N.L.L.B.
Edinburgh Home Teaching Society	,,	2700	233	,,	Vol. labour and purchase	,,	Yes, subsidises local Society

Name of Institution.	Nature of Library.	No. of Volumes.	No. of Readers.	Subscription or Carriage charged.	How Books acquired.	Catalogues.	If local Public Library interested.
Edinburgh, W. Craigmillar Asylum and School	For inmates	Various S.I.N.L.L.B.		None	Vol. and paid labour, purchase	None	Yes, gave books to local Society
Exeter Home Teaching Scty.	Circulating in district	70 S.I.N.L.L.B.	12	,,	,,	,,	No
Fife and Kinross	,,	400 Some music S.I.N.L.L.B.	30	Carriage where possible	,,	Printed	,,
Forfar Mission to the Blind	,,	1560	40	None	,,	,,	Yes
Glasgow Outdoor Blind	,,	6393	422	,,	Purchase	,,	Yes, sub. to I.N.L.L.B.
Glasgow Royal Asylum	Circulating to workers	2000	120	,,	,,	Braille and printed	Yes
Hodgkins' (Miss) Santa Lucia Library	Private circulation	200		Carriage where possible	Vol. labour	Typewritten	
Hull Blind Institute	Circulating to workers	806 and some music	80	,,	Purchase	Braille and printed	Yes, sub. to N. Counties
Inverness, Northern Counties Institution	Circulating in district	3760 and some music	124	Sub. optional	Vol. labour and purchase	None	No
Isle of Wight Home Teaching Society	,,	250	20	None	,,	Printed	,,
Leatherhead	For inmates	500 and music Supplemented I.N.L.L.B.	100	,,	Purchase	Braille	

Name of Institution.	Nature of Library.	No. of Volumes.	No. of Readers.	Subscription or Carriage charged.	How Books acquired.	Catalogues.	If local Public Library interested.
Leicester Association	Circulating in district	1000 S.I.N.L.L.B.	50	None	Vol. labour and purchase	Printed	No
Liverpool (Miss Hornby's Library)	,,	1859	56	,,	Vol. and paid labour	Braille and printed	Yes, houses books
London Catholic Truth Scty.	,,	600	30	Sub. and carriage charged	,,	Printed	Seven Public Libraries in London and suburbs interested
London Home Teaching Scty	Circulating	7240	1267	None, except to a fewoutsidereaders Exception in special cases.	,,	,,	
London Incorpted. National Lending Library for the Blind	,,	14000 2000 music	5500 estimatd	Yes, both	Vol. and paid labour, purchase	Braille and printed	
London Indigent Blind Scty.	,,	Sub. for 5 centres to I.N.L.L.B.		None		I.N.L.L.B. catalogue	
London Society for Teaching the Blind to Read	For inmates	S.I.N.L.L.B.					
London Royal Normal Coll.	,,	5581 and music	150	,,	Vol. labour, machinery, and purchase	Braille	
Macclesfield Home Teaching Society	Circulating in district	90 and music	12	,,	Purchase	None	No
Manchester & Salford Blind Aid Society	Circulating	3991 Some music S.I.N.L.L.B.	120	Free locally. Sub. and carr. outside readers	Vol. and paid labour	Braille and printed	Yes, subsidises M. & S.B.A.S.
Manchester, Henshaw's Blind Asylum	From inmates	1500 and music	100	None	Vol. labour, machine, and purchase	,,	Yes

Name of Institution.	Nature of Library.	No. of Volumes.	No. of Readers.	Subscription or Carriage charged.	How Books acquired.	Catalogues.	If local Public Library interested.
Moon Society	Circulating	500	70	None	Machinery	None	Yes, sub. to I.N.L.L.B.
Newcastle-on-Tyne H.T.S.	Circulating in district		5	,,	Vol. labour and purchase	Printed	Yes, embossed section
Newcastle Royal Victoria School	For inmates	600	30	,,	Purchase	,,	Yes
Northampton & County Association	,,	Miscellaneous	4	None	,,	None	No
North Shields Northern Counties Blind Society	Circulating	4000	170	When poor carr. one way	Purchase, machinery, and vol labour	Braille and printed	Yes
Oldham H.T.S.	Circulating in district	447	44	,,	Purchase and gifts	None	Yes, sub. to M. & S.B.A.S.
Oxford Blind Society	,,	371 S.I.N.L.L.B.	44	None	Vol. labour and purchase	Printed	Yes
Oxford Students Library	Circulating to students only	900	45	Donations expected	,,	Braille and printed	Houses books
Perth Society for Teaching the Blind	Circulating in district	804	43	None	Purchase	,,	Yes, subsidises local Society
Preston Homes for the Blind	For inmates	160 and music S.I.N.L.L.B.	30	,,	,,	Printed	Yes, sub. to I.N.L.L.B.
Reading B.A.S.	,,	30	5	,,	Vol. labour	,,	No

Name of Institution.	Nature of Library.	No. of Volumes.	No. of Readers.	Subscription or Carriage charged.	How Books acquired.	Catalogues.	If local Public Library interested.
Rochdale Society for the Blind	For inmates	100 S.I.N.L.L.B.	19	None	Purchase	Braille	Yes, subsidises local Society
Sheffield Inst. for the Blind	,,	1100	100	,,	,,	In preparation.	Yes, embossed section
Society for the Propagation of the Gospel	Circulating			,,			
Stirling, Clackmannan, and Linlithgow Society for the Blind	For inmates	1750	50	,,	Vol. labour	,,	No
Swansea & S. Wales Inst.	,,	40			,,		,,
Taunton H.T.S.	,,	300 S.I.N.L.L.B.	12	Charge carriage	,,	Printed	
Ulster Society for Deaf, Dumb, and Blind	,,				,,		Yes, sub to I.N.L.L.B.
Wakefield Society for the Blind	,,	200	20	Sub. where possible	,,		Yes, sub. to M. & S.B.A.S.
Wales (North) H.T.S.	Circulating in Wales	1552 and music	113	Carriage where possible	Vol. labour and purchase		No
Wolverhampton Society for the Blind	Circulating in district	500	36	None	,,	,,	Yes
Worcester College for the Blind	For inmates	Some music, uncounted		Charge to occasional outside readers	Machinery	,,	Yes, sub. to I.N.L.L.B.
York School for the Blind	Circulating in York	350 and music	50	Carriage only	Vol. labour and purchase	Braille and printed	,,

Foreign Libraries.

Name of Institution.	Nature of Library.	No. of Volumes.	No. of Readers.	Subscription or Carriage charged.	How Books acquired.	Catalogue.	Opinion of Centralisation of Libraries.
Copenhagen, Royal Institution for the Blind.	Circulating.	13,000 and music	...	...	...	Braille and printed.	Already in operation in Denmark, where there are only 2 Libraries for the Blind.
Hamburg, Institution for the Blind.	,,	12,920	900	Carriage charged	By hand labour and machinery.	,,	Only 2 Libraries in Germany. Have already practical Centralisation.
Paris, Association Valentin Haüy.	,,	29,000	1500	½d. a week sub. to Parisians. Cases circulated throughout the country.	Mainly by hand labour. Some machine made.	,,	Have already Centralisation.
Stockholm, Institution for the Blind.	,,	4,400 48 pieces of music	250	Carriage charged	Mainly by hand labour. Some presented by Printing House	,,	,,

At the conclusion of her paper Miss Austin remarked: Since writing this, I have been asked to give a paper at the Public Libraries Meeting in Perth. I wish you would let me carry a message from this Conference to those present at that meeting. I should then have the weight of your opinion behind me.

The Chairman: I am quite sure, ladies and gentlemen, you will sympathise with me when I say how very intense my disappointment is, after this very admirable commencement of your Conference, to be forced to leave, but I have an appointment which I must keep, and therefore, heartily thanking Miss Austin for her instructive and enlightening paper, I will ask Miss Bainbrigge to open the discussion, and the President of the Exeter Institution for the Blind to take the chair, I am very sorry to be obliged to leave you, but I do so only in person and not in spirit.

Mr. H. J. Wilson: Ladies and gentlemen. Before the Bishop goes, I am sure I shall express the wish of everyone in tendering our sincere thanks for his most inspiring and helpful speech to introduce the work of the Conference. We are very grateful indeed that he should have been here, and thankful for those most inspiring and helpful words he has spoken.

The Chairman: I can only say, as a practical man, "If you are inspired, on the inspiration act." (Applause.)

[The Bishop then left the Hall, and the chair was taken by Mr. Sebastian C. Snow.]

The Chairman: I will call on Miss Bainbrigge to open the discussion.

Miss E. Bainbrigge, Secretary, Home Teaching Society for the Blind, London: It is because I represent the oldest Circulating Library for the Blind in the United Kingdom—I suppose perhaps the oldest in the world—that I have been asked to open the discussion on Libraries for the Blind following on the able paper of Miss Austin, for whose energy and ability I have the highest admiration, however much I may chance to differ from her opinions. Many people do not know of this and similar organisations. My own experience concerning the production and distribution of books covers sixteen years, and we have now for the use of our readers, in and around London and the Home Counties, 7240 volumes in Moon and Braille types, of which most of the Braille and all the new Moon ones are in constant circulation.

They are for the most part taken round to each reader and changed once a fortnight by the Home Teacher for the district. We thus make sure that none are neglected. Those who need books most are often just the people who cannot go or send to fetch them from a library. The Teacher, knowing his books and his readers, can suit varying tastes, and his bi-weekly visit and chat over the books is much looked forward to. Many good Braille readers get busy and read little; old people spend hours over it. We believe also intensely in the invigorating influence of the Home Teachers. Books give them a reason for calling. They have probably done more than anyone knows to set the blind to work. We have good ground to fear that if public libraries do take over the charge of the books and pay large subscriptions from the rates to the National Blind Lending Library, that subscriptions to local Home Teaching Societies will decline. People will say they pay rates for the blind to have books. I will give you one instance. A lady who has for years subscribed so that a poor relation should be taught to read and have books, lately objected to pay, saying that "she ought to get them from the Public Library." This blind woman is among some who have just been induced to sign a petition asking for books from the Public Library. She and several others told our Teacher they did not want them, and should not go for them, as he brought them plenty; but they did not like to refuse the gentleman who wanted twenty signatures! If the Public Library does get the books we shall lose our £1 subscription. Probably the experience of the Chief Librarian of the Westminster Libraries will be repeated. He told me a few weeks ago that his Committee for some years voted £10 a year for embossed literature. At first there were five borrowers, but when they dwindled to one the experiment was given up. It was too hard on the ratepayers!

To inexperienced people it sounds so nice that the blind should go to the Public Library like other folk and choose their own books. They do not realise the difficulties of dealing with books which are in six or eight or fourteen volumes instead of in one: e.g., suppose a slow reader takes out Vol. I. all the rest are kept waiting for that book. I am often told that some borrowers from public libraries begin a book and cannot finish it, while others commence in the middle and never read the beginning. If books are distributed by someone who knows all about his readers, he does not let the slow one begin on a book until the quick ones have done with it. Knowing his books and his readers, he can suit various tastes.

I entirely disagree with Miss Austin's dictum that "Public Libraries can be our best friends in the distribution of embossed literature." I hold that in large centres the distribution of the bulk of that literature should be managed by the local H.T.S.B. Society, or where there is no branch, by a sub-committee of the local General Institute for the Blind, who should subscribe to the Central Library, and also pass on books of their own when done with, as we already do. The needs of specially quick readers, and of isolated ones, can be supplemented by post, and, if necessary, by direct arrangements with the Central Library.

I have purposely dealt first with distribution in case my time should fail. Now I go back to production.

I agree with Miss Austin that much greater care should be taken than formerly to instruct Braille writers and to correct their sheets; but I think as far as possible this should be done locally. I do not believe in detaching people from local interests by over-centralisation. Three or four competent ladies come to my office, correct books, and give instruction to writers, either personally or by post. Several of the best workers for the *general* well-being of the blind have been drawn into the work through bringing their Braille writing to me. One and another, thus coming into personal touch with me, has been induced to visit and help blind people: e.g., The Superintendent of one of our Teachers and Representative of Metropolitan Union would, I am sure, not have found her vocation if she had merely sent up her Braille sheets to a Central Library. Competent correctors should be at each large centre, and books go first into that library. Names of any specially abstruse or technical works should be given into the Central Library.

Duplication. It seems to me that quite too much objection is taken to this. If an interesting book comes out, which many want to read, and if four or five copies are made in different parts of England, a large number of the blind can read the book while its interest is fresh, and so they are put on a par with the sighted. One of the first things I learned in Victoria Street was that the blind like above all things to be *up-to-date*. If you insist on avoiding duplication, you must wait till one copy is made, and then a second done by a blind person, and not till then can one copy even be available for the readers. Meanwhile, it would seem that voluntary writers are to go on producing other things for which there is much less demand, just to avoid duplication.

It seems to me that if you have 100 people wanting the same book,

it is better to have five copies of that than one copy of that and four of others not so much wanted.

Universal Catalogue. I see no harm in having an Universal Catalogue made for *reference*, but the publication of this, besides being enormously expensive, would, I fear, lead to endless dissatisfaction.

It is said that every book should be at the disposal of every blind person. But I find in any large centre a book of say six volumes should remain for at least a year. The Chief Librarian may know where it is, but what is to happen if requests for it arrive from ten other centres? The neighbours of those who had it first would be very angry if it were not passed round to them. People who have not experience of *district* working do not understand this difficulty. The best books get promised ahead to Teachers with adjoining districts.

Dr. Robt. C. Moon (Hon. Secretary of the Home Teaching Society for the Blind, Philadelphia, U.S.A.): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—In the first place it gives me the greatest pleasure to convey to this Conference the hearty greetings of the Pennsylvania Home Teaching Society and Free Circulating Library for the Blind, of which I have the honour to be Secretary, and also of the Moon Society for the Blind at Brighton.

I feel that we are greatly indebted to Miss Austin for bringing before this Conference the subject of a National Library for the Blind, and I think I cannot do better than refer briefly to the Library work of the Pennsylvania Home Teaching Society for the Blind, as well as the advances which have been made in establishing departments for the blind in other Public Libraries of the United States.

In the year 1882 my late father, Dr. William Moon, accompanied by my sister, Miss Moon, visited the United States and introduced Home Teaching of the Blind. They were successful in founding a society in Philadelphia, which is the pioneer Home Teaching Society of the United States. The Society's library at that time consisted principally of books in the Moon type; but since then large numbers of books in other types have been added to it.

Mr. John P. Rhoads, the late Treasurer of the Bible House for 16 years, conducted the circulation, and the books were distributed by the Home Teachers in Philadelphia, and they were also loaned to blind persons in the United States free of charge.

In 1898 it became necessary to reorganise the Society, and it seemed best at that time to deposit the Society's library in the Free Library of

Philadelphia, as the Trustees kindly undertook to loan the books for us to the blind of the City free of charge. The Home Teaching Society, however, held itself responsible for the purchase of all books and the clerical and all other expenses connected with the circulation outside of Philadelphia.

Very soon the circulation increased, and the passing in 1904 of an Act of Congress granting free postage of all embossed literature loaned from public libraries, gave a great impetus to the demand for books, until our circulation throughout the States reached 17,422 per annum in the five different types, and of these nearly 11,000 were in the Moon type.

During the past six years the Legislature of Pennsylvania has aided the work by granting it appropriations from the State. At its last session the Legislature appropriated $8,000 for two years, that is at the rate of £800 per annum.

The Society has four Teachers—three of whom are blind. Three are engaged in teaching in Philadelphia and one in Pittsburgh.

When the Home Teacher was appointed by us in Pittsburgh, a supply of the Society's books in Philadelphia was immediately sent to that City, where they are kindly cared for by the officials of the Carnegie Library. This branch library has about 600 volumes in Moon type, besides many books in the dotted types which belong to the Carnegie Library. The circulation of the embossed books in Pittsburgh and its neighbourhood has nearly doubled during the past twelve months.

It appears to me that it is absolutely essential to the prosperity of the home teaching work that the readers of that locality should be promptly supplied with books from their local Library instead of its being necessary for the librarians to send every evening a demand for the books needed to Philadelphia, which is 300 or 400 miles distant.

The number of volumes in our Pittsburgh branch library will be increased at an early date, but not one of those already sent there has been returned to us as not needed.

We have been favoured by the Census Bureau at Washington with the names and addresses of all blind persons in Pennsylvania, as enumerated in the census returns of 1900 and 1910, and we have observed that within ten years three-fourths of those enumerated have either died or removed to a fresh locality. This surely indicates that a well-stocked Moon library cannot lose its usefulness, for a similar number of new blind persons is always appearing to fill the place of

those who have died or removed. This also shows the necessity of keeping up the Home Teaching work. In large communities it is never completed.

The library work in Philadelphia was so successful that it soon attracted the attention of librarians of other State and Municipal Libraries, and the Public Libraries in Boston and New York City, the N.Y. State Library in Albany, the Public Library in Chicago, the Enoch Pratt Library in Baltimore, and the California State Library in Sacramento have within the past few years established departments for the blind in connection with their libraries for the sighted.

In Cincinnati a "Library Society for the Blind," established a few years ago, deposits its embossed books in the Public Library of Cincinnati, and they are loaned to any blind person in the United States. There are also a few other Public Libraries which have some embossed books upon their shelves. They are not, however, allowed to go beyond the States in which they are located.

The tendency in the United States is to form departments for the blind in State or Municipal Public Libraries, which will act as centres for the distribution of books among the blind of the States in which they are situated.

Wherever a State, such as California, has provided itself with a fair supply of embossed books in the principal types, and earnestly endeavours to provide for the literary needs of the older as well as the younger blind readers, there is no necessity for our Society in Philadelphia, as in former times, to loan books to the blind in that far distant State; but there is no reason why our Pennsylvania Home Teaching Society's Library should not develop into a National Library, in the sense that it should possess copies of all works in the various types printed in English and foreign languages for the blind, as well as apparatus of various kinds used for the purpose of education. The collection would necessarily be a valuable one for reference, but arrangements could be made for the loaning of the rarer works to those at a distance from Philadelphia.

For many years to come it will be necessary for us in Philadelphia to send ordinary embossed books wherever they may be needed, as there are as yet comparatively few centres from which books can be drawn. We have been in the habit for some years past of sending small libraries of books to certain Free Libraries, even to the Library of Congress at Washington; and as our supply of books is increased we shall send more to distant Mining and Western States where

officials of Institutions have arranged to care for the proper distribution of the volumes.

The importance of a National Library is undoubted, but if in this country it is to be the fountain of supply of all the literature loaned to, or borrowed by, the blind of Great Britain and Ireland, a large number of copies of most books will be needed to meet the National requirements of 80 Home Teaching Societies and many private individuals.

Six, and sometimes more, copies of every newly published Moon book (of which there will be sixty new volumes this year) are sent from Brighton to our Library in Philadelphia, and when we have sent one copy to add to our books in the Pittsburgh branch, we find we are not always able promptly to meet the demands of our readers who often exchange their own books at the Library, and are disappointed if they have to wait for what they want.

Such a National Library as the one proposed would need a very large building in which to store the books, and a large staff of assistants to perform the requisite clerical duties. Everything, however, can be accomplished if sufficient money is forthcoming, and a cordial, hearty co-operation is shown by all existing libraries and other organisations interested in promoting library work. Centralisation seems to be the order of the day, in educational as well as commercial concerns.

Considering the vast territory of the United States, it may not be practicable to establish a National *Circulating* Library for the Blind, hut yet it may by this Conference be deemed feasible and advantageous for the blind of this country.

The writer of the paper under consideration makes her strongest appeal when she reminds us that "it is the blind reader who is to be considered"; and notwitstanding all that has been said against the ideal National Library as proposed, it must be conceded that if such a library shall be the means of giving to the blind a larger and greater variety of literature, with better service than can be rendered by existing methods, every effort should be made to forward the scheme with all the enthusiasm that has prompted the recommendation of it; and I venture to suggest that no considerations of expense should stand in the way of an approval of the plan being expressed by this Conference.

Mr. Oke (Margate): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I have not much to say. I can't go into the question very deeply because I am not an expert, but as I am fully in sympathy with the

centralisation scheme, I think I ought to express the fact. I can see a good deal in it. One thing is, that I am in favour of the united catalogue, because it seems to me to be most important that we should know just what books are available. I know there must be many books in the hands of private individuals that I should be glad to be able to get hold of, and there are doubtless many books of mine that others would be very glad to borrow if they knew of them. Anyhow, there are books in certain libraries which subscribers to other libraries very much want to read. That all goes to prove that if we knew of their existence we might arrange to borrow them for the purpose of transcription. If they are inaccurate we could get a printed copy and have them corrected, but this is much easier from a Braille copy than from a sighted one; and of course the blind copyists have to be considered, and I am in favour of more employment being given to them in this way. I simply want to support Miss Austin. I think that the good writers should not be limited to certain areas. I know one beautiful Braille writer whose work all goes to one library. Well, I don't begrude it to that library, but it is such good Braille I think it is a great pity it should not be more widely used. I do not think I have more to say.

Mr. Passmore (Blind Social Aid Society, London): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I hope that you will excuse some slight nervousness on my part, as this is the first occasion on which I have ever made a speech in public; but though I have not much to say, I feel bound in duty to come up and support with what little I can say the most admirable scheme which Miss Austin has laid before you. I have been studying this question carefully for something like two years, and I thought all its advantages were pretty patent to me already, but the more I hear of it the more it grows on me. There is this great advantage in the scheme, it will assist us in getting the books that we most require, by gathering from all parts of the country an idea of the books needed and which are in demand. It will enable the publishing firms to choose without trouble those books which it is most desirable they should stereotype. Further, I think that when we have three sighted writers in different parts of the country, it is better for them to copy three different books. A paid blind writer can make other copies once the book is in Braille. Thus you see we do not sacrifice duplication—we merely hand the work over to those who need it most. I think too that the little difficulties which Miss Bainbrigge anticipates with the Home Teachers would be met. I have not the honour of Miss

Bainbrigge's acquaintance, but I do know Miss Austin, and I feel sure that if other libraries are carried on like hers there should not be much difficulty. I fail to see that Home Teachers will be worse off if they have to go to the public libraries for their books, as they would have a larger selection, because this scheme must increase the number of stereotyped books, and it must increase the labour given to blind copyists. I want to impress that point upon you, and hope you will excuse these few halting remarks.

Mr. Wilson (Chairman of the Conference Committee): Mr Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—It seems to me that after hearing Miss Austin's excellent paper and Miss Bainbrigge's remarks, and also the last speaker's, you will agree that this is a very important matter indeed, and some definite action ought to be taken. We ought to see that this discussion has some practical results, and does not end in mere words and expressions of opinion. Miss Austin has adduced very strong arguments in support of her scheme, and I certainly think some action ought to be taken. I shall therefore make a suggestion at the end of my few words.

The paper we have heard shows very clearly that good work is being done, but also shows with equal clearness that it is necessary there should be some union of these good works on behalf of the blind; combined effort is absolutely necessary for success. I will take only a few of the points to which Miss Austin has referred. One of the most important is the universal catalogue, and I do not see any of the dangers which Miss Bainbrigge has pointed out. The objection she raises is that such a scheme might hold out false hopes, but surely if in the universal catalogue there was only one copy of a certain book, and twenty persons wanted to read it at the same time, they would naturally have to wait their turn. But the great point is that they would know where to obtain it. I think also that there are many advantages about this universal catalogue. For instance, a blind man, however isolated will know exactly what there is to read, and where to get it. At present I understand there is no organisation at all in this matter, and we have heard that there is frequently overlapping in the production of an identical book in various parts of the country. A centralisation scheme seems to me thoroughly feasible and much to be desired. Of course the details of the scheme would have to be thrashed out, but we certainly require some scheme to knit together all who are working in connection with libraries for the blind, so that a national library might be built up which would contain a copy of every book that exists in

raised type, in fact it has been referred to as a British Museum Library in miniature for the Blind.

The second point I want to refer to is the circulation of books. Now, it is truly said that in many public libraries embossed books are asked for very seldom, but I think the answer to this is very clear. Probably these books have been read once, and blind readers will not go again and ask for the same book; but I think those books might be very useful and very valuable elsewhere, and ought not to remain on dusty shelves. After so much time and money have been spent on their production, they ought to be circulated to the fullest possible extent.

The other points are: the avoidance of duplication and certificates of proficiency for copyists. I presume we are all agreed on the desirability of these, and that further steps should be taken to ensure correct writing.

Circulation through a central library or libraries seems to be very important. We must remember that many of the Institutions and Societies for the Blind, and also public libraries, obtain at the present time their books from centres, thus getting a far better choice of literature for their readers than would be the case if each laboriously and at great expense fitted up an inefficient library for itself. This form of circulation was, I believe, initiated by the London National Lending Library, and at the present time is being successfully carried on in a small way, though hampered by want of funds; but sufficient has been done to show the possibilities of the scheme. I understand, however, from Miss Austin that she rather wants to go a step further; that she wants to make use of, or rather get work out of, the local libraries by having books written for them locally, instead of merely sending the books on payment of the subscription.

The other point is Public Libraries. We have heard Dr. Moon, Miss Bainbrigge, and Miss Austin speak on this matter. Here we have a large organisation already at work in the distribution of books, and many of them subscribe to libraries for the Blind in order to receive periodical consignments of books. This arrangement seems invaluable as the blind, who need books more than sighted people, are put on an equal footing with the sighted by obtaining books free. It may be said that blind persons will not go to a Public Library for their books. Well, assuming that this is so, surely this is a splendid opening for the Home Teaching Societies. Where there is a Home Teaching Society, the teacher could obtain his books from the Public Library, and thus have a far better choice of books. I agree with Miss Bainbrigge that

there are difficulties to be met in London, but I cannot help thinking that if we put our heads together these difficulties ought not to be insurmountable. When there is no Home Teaching Society, we ought to get a blind man engaged as a colporteur by the charitably disposed people of the district. We ought to provide sufficient literature for the blind, not only as a means of education, but also as a solace in their affliction.

One more point and I have finished. We have heard from Miss Austin of a coming Conference of Representatives of Public Libraries at Perth, when a resolutiou will be proposed, which I should like to read to you. It is this :—

> "That it is desirable to effect a systematised circulation of embossed literature through the medium of the public libraries."

Now I want you to realise that this is a most important step, and we ought to do our utmost to shape their course of action, and not to let slip the opportunity of working cordially in co-operation with the Public Libraries. It is a most far-reaching scheme, by which every blind person will have access to books suitable to them as the seeing people now have. I think therefore that we ought to send a message of thanks, through Miss Austin, to the Perth Conference, for considering the cause of the Blind, and offer them our earnest co-operation.

We cannot deal with many of the important details of Miss Austin's paper to-day, but if we think the scheme good, and worthy of consideration, we can make a suggestion, and I would like to suggest that a Committee be formed by the Conference to thrash out the subject, to promote the union of libraries, and, if necessary, to approach and meet the Sub-Committee of the Public Libraries Conference which will probably be appointed.

I should like to say how very much indebted we are for what has been done by the Libraries for the Blind. I look back twenty-five years and remember that a lady guardian came to me in London, knowing that I was Secretary of the Gardner's Trust, and said, "What am I to do? I have ten or twelve blind people in the workhouse; I have made enquiries as to what embossed books are there, and have ascertained that there is only one book in Moon type." Naturally I was anxious to know what this interesting book was, and it turned out to be the third Book of Moses, called "Leviticus."

Mr. W. H. Illingworth (Manchester): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I did not intend to speak this afternoon, but my name was mentioned in Miss Austin's paper as an opponent of her scheme, and I think I am justified in saying a word. Mr. Wilson, however, has taken the wind out of my sails, as he did this morning, but there are one or two points I would like to emphasise.

I have been connected with the production of literature in the past. I have objected to the idea of a Central Lending Library for the Blind on the same grounds as I have objected to lending libraries on a general scale for the blind in other places—that is, from a hygienic point of view. But on conversing with several blind friends during the last few days, I find that they are quite willing to take any risks in that direction if they can get hold of books, and as Miss Austin has stated, it is the blind reader who must be considered before anything else. I shall do in this case, as I have done throughout my career in the blind world, try to adapt myself to the blind person's point of view.

Now, having said this, I may say that I have heard several people remark that Miss Austin's scheme is Utopian. Well, it is none the worse for that. We must have a Utopia of some kind before we achieve anything worth achieving in our lives, and if this Utopian scheme only leads us who are working in the interests of the blind in literature and other things, to shape our course towards some definite system, it will have done a great work.

The lady who opened the discussion, my old friend Miss Bainbrigge, I think rather mistook the reference to the duplication of books. I do not think it is the intention of those who are supporting the centralisation scheme to have only one copy of a book in that library. The idea is rather to have a reasonable number of copies of all books in great demand, and as the demand would be much better regulated and much better understood by a central library, so that central library would have a much better chance of duplicating those books for which there is need of duplication. To some extent the central lending library idea is a very good one. I think, however, the idea of a central library is very much more valuable from the point of view of a reference library—the British Museum Library in miniature as it has been called. I would, I think, deprecate the idea of doing away with local effort; rather I should say have a central lending library for Scotland and the North of England; well, for convenience say let each of the

"Unions" of the country have a lending library. It would reduce the cost of transit. I must say Miss Austin dismissed that question very casually and in a very easy manner, but it is a very important one. One of the other gentlemen speakers also discussed another rather important question in a very casual manner. He said something to the effect that the central library would avoid the duplication of books by sighted people and would give work to blind writers. That is excellent, but are they all to be in London? What about the blind writers in the provinces? There are a great number of them. It would not be right to rob Peter to pay Paul. That wants looking at, I think. I won't enter into details; they can be thrashed out later, if we can get on with the central idea and a general scheme first.

I would also like very much to emphasise Mr. Wilson's statement that the first action should be taken through the medium of the public libraries. This is a capital idea of getting indirect State aid in the matter to begin with.

We have heard from Dr. Moon of the way in which the libraries are supported in America. But I could not make out whether Dr. Moon favoured the idea or was opposed to it. He was very wise in steering such a course as seemed to support it, and at the same time to keep his own counsel. I think Dr. Moon has benefited from his stay in America, by acquiring a distinct shrewdness in these matters.

Mr. Dixson (Oxford): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—In discussing a question of this sort it always seems to me that the first question is, "Does such a scheme promise to supply a want? And if it does, does that want exist?" Are the conditions that we see around us at present satisfactory? If they are, there is nothing more to be said; but if not, do we want those conditions removed? If so, it seems to me we are not concerned with the exact details of Miss Austin's scheme, whether exactly right or not. Miss Austin has pointed out to us that we are suffering from conditions that need removal. Why, as a matter of fact, how often do we write to "Progress" to enquire whether such and such a book exists in Braille? The editor possesses a good deal of information, and can often tell us, but it would be much simpler to refer to a catalogue to find out what we want to know.

In the second place, something has been said by Mr. Illingworth as to passing over the cost of transit very lightly. Well, I do not

quite know whether it is germane to the point, but I have a promise from Viscount Valentia (our member, who did so much in the reduction of postage in this country); I have a letter from him to say that he is perfectly willing to introduce a deputation from this Conference on the subject of international reduced postage if we like to present it. But that is not all. Why would it not be possible for us to induce the carrying Companies to come to an agreement among themselves that they will all carry our books for the same price, and get the cost of the transit of large numbers of books reduced in that way? Because it seems to me that if we want a certain thing done—if we are dissatisfied with the present condition of things—then we can easily work out a scheme (though it will take a long time) to remedy that state of affairs. Now, Mr. Illingworth made a very interesting suggestion. He said, "I would not be in favour of diminishing local effort, but I would propose a library for each of the Unions." Well, I can extend that suggestion. You know there is such a thing as a "Union of Unions." Why not a union of the libraries of the different Unions? (Applause).

Miss Bainbrigge said something with regard to the Home Teaching Societies, but what about those parts of the country where they do not exist? Their needs have to be provided for, and it seems to me that it would be much better for them that the readers should know exactly what books are in existence in embossed type in this country. Miss Bainbrigge told us—(and let me say that the blind of London and many other places owe a debt of gratitude to the work which Miss Bainbrigge has done)—(applause)—Miss Bainbrigge made some reference to duplication. I should like to tell an incident in my own career. When I made up my mind to take a degree at the University of Oxford, I found it necessary, for one of the examinations, to read a certain work. I went to the expense of getting two enormous volumes written out—one made 248 sides of large Braille—and having partially mastered the book, I met a gentleman also taking the same examination, and he said, "Why, I could have lent you the book." Now, that is what we want to avoid. Books that are likely to be popular we want duplicated, but books wanted by very few, and wanted very badly, we do not want duplicated, but we do want to know where they are to be found, and I sincerely hope—Mr. Wilson did not put it as a proposition, but if he had proposed that a Committee be appointed I would have been glad to second it—that a

Committee be appointed to discuss this whole question, and to try to bring about further co-operation.

I heartily thank Miss Austin for her paper. I think there was one slight inaccuracy in it, however. I believe she said the "Weekly Summary" was the first weekly newspaper for the blind. I think she will find, however, that the "Revue Braille" existed before. [It was here pointed out that Miss Austin meant that the "Weekly Summary" was the first *English* newspaper for the blind.]

We have good reason to thank Miss Austin for bringing forward this subject, and indeed there were so many suggestions in the paper that I think when we come to take it home we shall find it rather stiff reading. I sincerely hope that the suggestions will be carried into effect.

Mr. Stone (Edinburgh): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—The concluding words of Mr. Dixson's remarks lead me to what I have to say first. He spoke about taking home Miss Austin's paper, but unfortunately many have not got it. The paper has been printed in two forms—letterpress and Braille—but the Braille copies, I am sorry to say, are still on their way from Edinburgh, though they were sent off on Thursday morning. I hope they will arrive this evening, and they will then be distributed to-morrow to those who would like them. I am sure the paper was not only worth hearing, but worth reading afterwards.

So much has been said after over an hour's debate, that little now remains. But I should like to speak on the subject as to how it affects those who are engaged in educational work. I don't know about the Home Teaching Societies, but I can tell you how it affects Teachers, and, strangely enough, I have had a similar experience to that which Mr. Dixson related. In January it was necessary for one of my boys at the University to have three books of Cicero in Braille. I looked up the Oxford catalogue, but could not find them. I had to put on the whole of my staff, and we got the whole three books written in eight days. Then I came to London, met Mr. Pearson, and told him how smart I had been, and then he informed me that he had the books in Braille at Norwood. Of course I did not know this. If there were only a catalogue giving particulars of all the valuable books existing in Braille, and where they may be obtained, it would be a very great boon to those engaged in the work. We have at West Craigmillar

one of the finest libraries of Greek and Latin books which exists in Braille, and I am quite prepared to give a full list to be included in any catalogue that may be prepared, and we shall be quite willing to lend them.

Mr. J. Frew Bryden (Glasgow): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—Miss Austin has told us in the beginning of her paper that she is putting before us an ideal, and I am one who believes in seeing visions and in dreaming dreams; and I am quite sure that if it is a worthy ideal, it is worth while to think it over and try to come to a wise conclusion. Perhaps it is because I am Scotch that I approach the subject with caution. I am told that those who have to deal with horses, and bring them for the first time into contact with a steam roller, generally walk the horse about the machinery half-a-dozen times, and then the horse gets accustomed to the machinery. Well, I am at the stage of walking round the machinery, and perhaps my nerves will get steadier after a time.

I think there is a good deal in some of the points that Miss Austin has put before us, but I think also that there are some other points which must be looked at in connection with them. Miss Austin, so far as I can see from a brief glance at the paper, and after listening to it, seems to have three main points that she is contending for. The first is a universal library, the second a universal catalogue, and the third—and very important point—in regard to the unification of the forces in the way of Braille writers. These seem the three main points.

In regard to the universal library we have been told it is to bring about a sort of British Museum Library in miniature. It seems to me that it would become more of a British Museum than a British Museum Library. So far as I have seen in connection with libraries for the blind—and the same thing will I know obtain in connection with any libraries—there is, and will always be, a proportion of books that will become so much lumber after a time. That will be the case anywhere, and even with a universal catalogue the difficulties will be greater. I fear there are great difficulties in the way, but as it can only be accomplished by the co-operation of Societies for the Blind, I will say nothing more in regard to it, but will go on to the universal catalogue. It is only by having such a catalogue that the blind could obtain a correct knowledge of what is to had in the way of reading. The universal catalogue would, when this ideal is accomplished, contain practically every book in

every library in Great Britain and Ireland. That is to say each library would send a catalogue to the central library, and all would go into one catalogue issued by them. How this catalogue is to be distributed I do not know ; only if it is to be on sale, and applied for, only those specially interested would discover the stores of knowledge available for them. This brings me to an important point. I may say I am speaking now particularly from the point of view of local experience and knowledge. I am connected with a Society in the West of Scotland, and in glancing over the list of libraries I find that ours seems to come in about third after the National Lending Library ; so in this way it appears to represent an important factor in the case. I rather think that when we bear in mind another fact, that the books in our own library are fully taken advantage of by the readers we have, really with the very best intentions we could scarcely be prepared to put our books at the disposal of the whole country. So there would be needed a central library with a much larger number of books than any library in existence. Let us by all means have a grand central library from which anyone who wants a special book ean get it. There is a class of readers for whom I have the utmost sympathy. There are large areas that are not within the district of any Home Teaching Society, and it is very difficult for the blind people living there to get hold of books. And I may say that here is a work cut out for the Unions, and the Union of Unions, to see that the country gets properly covered by Home Teaching Societies, with libraries attached. I say in regard to that class of readers it would be a great advantage to have a central library, but where there is already an existing library I do not see the same advantage. But I see this, that if a society in London (and I do not see why Miss Austin's library, which is doing such splendid work, should not take it up),—if it was so stocked and the arrangements such that it could supply special books to the smaller libraries, it would do a most useful work.

Now we come to the question of voluntary writers, and then again I refer to local Societies. We have voluntary writers, and we find that we can not ouly take up the books that we get from them, but a great many more, and those sent in are fully taken advantage of. We would like to have more writers. We make use of blind writers for extra copies, and this we might all do in our own districts. But why could we not in connection with all our societies make it a point, particularly when such a case has been

laid before us, to see to what extent we could influence individual lady writers to attach themselves to the scheme for a central library? And I think it would help to increase the number of voluntary writers without militating against those with a special interest in local work.

There is another point, viz., the relation of a Central Library to local societies. I should like to say I hope the day will be far distant when libraries in districts will be detached from local societies. These societies have created the readers, and the librarians in these libraries know the readers and their tastes, and will deal with them as could not be done in connection with a municipal library. With regard to municipal libraries we have heard different views, and opinions, and statements of fact; we have heard of municipal libraries where they have embossed books and nobody reads them. That was the case in Glasgow and Edinburgh some years ago; and in the case of Edinburgh (whose representative I see here to-day), the municipal library handed over the whole of the books to the local library. In Glasgow they did not do that, but gave £200 from the funds, and arranged to distribute the books through the Library of the Mission to the Out-Door Blind.

Other points I could touch on, but these may be a contribution to the subject.

Mr. William Harris (Eastbourne): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—It is with reluctance that I stand where I am, for I know I have not the ability to express in words my feelings. I must remind you that I am a deaf man, not blind: therefore I have not had the privilege of hearing what has been read or spoken; but I have had time to just look through the paper, and two or three things occur to me which I should like to bring to your notice.

On page 3 of the paper a question is asked about the public libraries. I have frequently enquired at public libraries in various parts of the country as to the demand for embossed books. I am told as a rule that nobody asks for them. Let me just say that there is a distinction between "a blind person" and "the blind," and our Conference is for the benefit of "the blind," and not for the benefit of the clever, well-to-do people, but the people—the poor people chiefly. They don't want the books. Moreover, I may remind you that blind people do not get their information through their fingers, but through the medium of their ears. I speak feelingly, for I know what I missed at school through not being able to hear.

I notice on page 4 a reference to accuracy and faults in the books. We want accuracy, not abbreviations and contractions, which only one

person here and there can understand; we want fully written type. And why do you call it Braille? In America it is called "Point." We do not use Braille now, we use an English Point Type. But that is not the subject before us.

I then refer to this proposed library, to which I wish success. I would remind those who have the management of it to consider carefully the size of the type. When I was a child we had picture books, with a *big* "C" for "Cat" and a big "D" for "Dog," with a picture of the animal in *the* letter; but the blind person has the smallest sign or letter possible in the smallest number of small dots. Why not give them big, bold type to learn from? Consider their infirmity and want of help.

There are other things I have noticed in the paper, but there is no time to refer to them now.

We should treat blind people as we treat sighted people. We find that certain blind persons are very successful. Why is this? It is because they have the capacity and opportunity for it. There are capable people who can see and capable people who are blind. You must not expect all blind people to be successful because Mr. Fawcett succeeded so wonderfully. You must remember his surroundings. He had educational advantages which "the blind" have not. I must not take up more of your time now.

Mr. Guy Campbell (Norwood): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—The two speakers immediately before the last one practically took up my point, but there are still one or two things about which I should like to ask your indulgence, as I think they are well worthy of consideration.

I am very delighted that the universal catalogue has been so emphasised by the speakers, and if a Committee should be formed, it seems to me that one of the things for them to do with regard to that universal catalogue is to see that such books as go out of date each year are removed from the catalogue; you will thus save having to add wings to your building, whether you have one big central library or a number of union libraries. It seems to me you must first get your catalogue and then have a Committee to annually revise it, recommending new books to be placed in it, and removing others.

The next point I would touch upon is that rather vexed one about local effort. Now, of course we know that the Unions exist, and we have heard about the cost of distribution. Supposing each union gets in touch with their Members of Parliament, I think many will be quite

prepared to entertain the idea of suggesting how funds may be obtained from various municipalities within their area, for books for the blind, though they might hesitate a good deal about pensions. Let us get in the thin end of the wedge by getting the local Members of Parliament to help to give the blind embossed books. From getting that in, you may afterwards get the higher point. I believe that if the Members of Parliament for Leeds or Liverpool could get their Corporations to get books in those Cities carriage free, others would take it up, and in a short time you would realise that ideal about which Dr. Moon spoke to us.

Those are the two points I wished to emphasise.

Mr. Siddall (Rochdale): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—Half of what I had in my mind to speak about has already been dealt with by other speakers, and you have had about enough of the library already, but I think it is the duty of all the blind to express their opinion, and I have been somewhat disappointed in the discussion on this paper.

Firstly, I should like to say that whatever our views on this question are, I think we must all thank Miss Austin for the trouble she has taken in the matter. Every sentence of her paper shows the amount of care she has given to the matter, and when we examine the paper we see to what a great amount of trouble she has gone; and I say I am disappointed. I had hoped for what might be called a fiery discussion. I had hoped for a great deal more on the opposition side, and I think really only two people have stood up to raise the slightest objection to a National Library. And they must pardon me if I speak plainly; they were Mr. Frew Bryden and Miss Bainbrigge. It seems rather strange to me that both of those speaking in opposition to a National Library, are doing the work of a National Library themselves on a small scale, and if they find it a success then I say the whole scheme, if carried out thoroughly, will be a great success.

Then I would like to support Mr. Wilson in his splendid remarks in favour of a National Library, and I do hope with Mr. Dixson that he will move that a Committee be formed to carry out the suggestion; and I think if such a Committee is formed even the warning of the canny Scotchman about "walking round the machine" will be taken into consideration. Then again, to supplement what Mr. Stone said about Cicero and the duplication of books, it was rather strange that the gentleman next to me should have possessed still another copy. All

this goes to prove that a National Catalogue is necessary, and if that is necessary it seems to me that it would be ridiculous to have to place on that catalogue that this book could be got at such a place and that at another. Why not have one library from which all can be obtained?

A good deal has been said about the Home Visiting Societies. Now the scheme proposed by Miss Austin is carried on in Rochdale in a small way. We have the books from the National Library and we find it a brilliant success. I may say that before I persuaded the Rochdale people to pay for the books coming from London, we had a few books on the shelves, and whenever I needed one it had to be dusted, which showed how little they were in use. Now we have a circulation equal to something like 400 volumes a year. And that comes to the point of what the Home Visiting people can do by taking a book to the blind people in their own homes. It makes the blind visitor a beast of burden, but I think he is willing, and it is worth his while.

Then again, with regard to the point Mr. Illingworth raised about the books carrying disease. I put that to the blind in my district, and they said, "If there is any risk it is worth it." I have carefully taken the opinion of all the blind with whom I have come in contact—and it has been my lot to move about the country to no small extent—and the honest and unbiassed opinion of those with whom I have come into contact all points the same way; and I have yet to find the first blind man who is in opposition to a National Library, and for that reason, and that only, I came up here to give this message from the blind who are unable to be present here to-day.

Mr. Henry Stainsby (London): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—It was not my intention to come forward to say anything this afternoon, because I understood the paper was only on *libraries* for the blind; but inasmuch as a good deal of the discussion has turned on the *production of books*, I thought you would not object if I said a little.

It appears to me that a great deal of the discussion is on the production of books *by hand*. Now, while I do not wish to disparage that method, I do hope we shall in future keep well in view the more rapid reproduction of books by *machinery*.

May I point out, Mr. Chairman, that as a matter of fact the blind world to-day is almost in the same position as was England before Caxton introduced printing into the couutry? At that time all books were written by hand. Now we have a number of books produced by

machinery, and I hope it will be my work to enormously increase the number. I cannot think that two or three hand-written copies of a book are enough. I have proved conclusively that one copy is never sufficient, no matter how rare the book may be. A short time ago the Managers of the Embossed Scientific Books Fund asked us to reproduce a book on Trigonometry. They were so satisfied that it would have only a small sale, that they offered to pay the whole cost of the plates. Before the work was finished five complete copies were ordered.

Now, I must compliment Miss Austin upon the very able paper she has read to us to-day. It reflects great credit upon her, and shows her to be a master of her work. And I can testify that the work of the National Lending Library is not to be surpassed. With most of what she has said I can cordially agree, but there are a few points with which I am not quite certain that I do agree: for instance, in the suggested universal catalogue. I think she has set a colossal task, and the magnitude of it is increased by the suggestion that has been made by Mr. Guy Campbell, that not only should it be kept up-to-date by adding new works, but also by deleting all that pass out of circulation. Having some interest in catalogues and their preparation, and knowing a little of what the work entails, I can testify that no sooner is a new catalogue published than it is out of date—before it is in the hands of the subscribers it is out of date. I quite agree that if some means could be devised whereby rare books could be accessible, it would be a great advantage, but before you attempt to undertake a universal catalogue I warn you to be careful. And I am not sure that I agree on the question of the "British Museum Library in miniature." Are you all aware that when a new book is published a copy of it must be sent to the British Museum? Of course we like to keep the laws, and are willing to send copies of our Braille books; but the Superintendent came to me and said he could not do with them as they took up too much room. I have been estimating this afternoon that the room in which we are now assembled would not contain more than 200,000 volumes of Braille. That will give you an idea of the magnitude of the Museum Library which has been suggested.

Miss Austin spoke of proficiency in writing, and acknowledged that stereotyped books as a rule are most accurate. I would like to urge that those who take up voluntary work in transcribing books should take a certificate of efficiency first. I go even further, and say that one certificate is not sufficient: it ought to be renewed every one or two years, so as to ensure proficiency in the Braille system.

A good deal has been said about the method of distributing books from the libraries. When in Birmingham we had a nice Home Teaching Branch, and a good many books were distributed through the medium of the teachers, and I think this an ideal system. I think we could meet Miss Austin's case if boxes or crates of books were sent to the Public Libraries, or Institutions, or Home Teachers, and through them distributed to the blind. I have found from experience that by far the best method of distribution is to take the books to the blind man's home. He finds great difficulty in going to a library, and my point is that to encourage a blind man to read you must take the books to his door, either through the post, through the railway, or through appointed teachers.

I have one thing to say against a great many lending libraries—and it is an extremely sore point with me—it is that many of the existing circulating libraries do not purchase the stereotyped books from our publishing houses. I think that trouble ought to be rectified at once and for ever. It seems to me little short of a scandal that books produced at great expense, with great care and accuracy and at a cheap rate, are not put in the hands of the blind. This does not apply to Miss Austin, who follows the excellent method of having an arrangement with all the publishing houses for one or more copies of every new book to be sent to her Library as soon as published. But there are existing libraries that do not do so, and I hope that to-day this state of things will be altered.

I thank you very warmly for listening to my remarks.

Miss H. E. Boord (London) spoke in regard to Esperanto, and gave the following *Reasons why Esperanto is a Great Blessing to the Blind* :—

Because it is an International Language, i.e., an auxiliary or second language for all nations.

If the blind of every nation were to learn Esperanto first only in addition to their mother tongue, they would have a common tongue for all purposes, and its possession would obviate the necessity of learning any foreign tongue whatever.

Foreign languages are all more or less difficult, but Esperanto is equally foreign to all nations, and it is very much easier to learn than any national tongue.

For this reason alone it must be a great blessing to the blind, for we all know how much more difficult it must be for them to study foreign tongues than it is even for us; for they have large and bulky grammars

and dictionaries (of many volumes each) to contend with, in hunting up intricate rules and complex words.

But Esperanto has the simplest grammar with no worrying exceptions to rules, and the smallest dictionary compatible with a language capable of expressing any shade of meaning possible.

Its universal adoption amongst the blind would therefore at once give them two privileges—it would open to them the literature of the whole world in one tongue, and it would *cheapen* their literature.

For the blind are (luckily) only a very small minority in each separate country, and books printed in Braille for the blind of each separate language must of necessity be very expensive; but if they could be printed in one language common to the blind of *all* countries, then they could be published very much more cheaply. This is our object.

The Esperanto Section of the National Lending Library was only formed about two years ago (although it had existed as a separate affair before that time), and I think its progress has fully justified the claims I am making for it. Last year we had only some three dozen books, and now we have over seventy. We have several blind writers at work copying books, besides many seeing helpers who are always busy producing first copies of new books. We have about thirty Blind Readers using the books. It will therefore at once be seen that seventy books do not go far towards meeting the demand. We want annual subscriptions, we want more writers, and we want good Braillists and Esperantists—a very difficult combination to get—to correct books for us.

International *letter* postage is already very cheap. We only want a universally cheaper tariff for book postage for the blind to be able to extend our work very greatly. Esperanto is also an excellent medium for inter-correspondence of the blind of different countries. And it is often used in teaching a foreign correspondent one's own, or some other foreign language. For instance, a gentleman (who is amongst us to-day) is teaching English to a Russian Esperantist. My friend knows no Russian and the Russian knows no English; but they have the easy tongue Esperanto as a common ground between them.

I have letters here from blind Esperantists in Australia, Massachusetts, Chicago, San Francisco, and others showing the help and pleasure which the International Language has proved to them.

Mr. Herbert Royston (London): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—Great schemes do not as a rule come into being all at once. Large streams as a rule arise from different sources, and I

believe, whether we endorse the paper or not, the work has begun in the libraries already existing up and down the country. One of the speakers seemed to doubt whether the blind required this scheme. Five years ago Islington adopted the Public Libraries Act, and in a few months opened their first library. After a little while the librarian put a notice in the library that he would be glad to hear from blind people who wanted embossed books. That notice hung up there, and was there for three years. Last Christmas twelve months I was calling on a young girl who is blind, and said, "I suppose you know you can get books from the Library?" She replied, "No you can't, because there are not enough readers." I thought that perhaps the friends of the blind did not tell them about it. I wrote to the librarian, and found that the enquiries he had received had been very few. However, I hunted up the blind people in the district, and found they wanted to have books; so I said, "You try again." They did so, and Mr. Duff, the librarian, induced the Committee to open a Braille section by subscribing to the National Lending Library. Then he sent a notice to all who had applied, telling them that if they would sent a list of books they wished to read he would be glad to supply them. He wrote to me afterwards, saying that after five days he had only three applications. I then thought they did not answer, because they did not know what books they could have; so I called on Miss Austin and said, "Give me about a score of catalogues." I took these to the librarian, asking him to send them to the individuals, and within a few days of getting them the blind people all sent lists of books. That proved that the blind do waut more facilities. After about nine months the librarian arranged for a double supply. The blind have as much right to the use of the Public Libraries as any other ratepayers, and I acted from that point of view.

Mr. H. J. Wilson (Chairman of Conference Committee): With the Chairman's permission, I want to ask the meeting whether it is in favour of having a Committee formed to consider the subject of Miss Austin's paper; and I should like to know also whether it would like a vote of thanks to go through Miss Austin to the Public Libraries Committee for kindly considering the cause of the Blind.

Mr. Gregory (National League of the Blind): Do you intend that the Committee should get to work at once, before the Conference breaks up, or after the Conference is over?

Mr. H. J. Wilson: I suggest that a Committee should be formed on Thursday, and the work commenced after the Conference.

Will those in favour kindly signify their assent by raising one hand. (On a show of hands Mr. Wilson's suggestion was declared to be carried with only one dissentient).

Are you also in favour of a message being sent to the Public Libraries Committee, thanking them for taking up the subject of the Blind and considering the whole question ?

(Carried unanimously).

THE CHAIRMAN: I will now ask Miss Austin to reply.

MISS AUSTIN: I have only a very few words to say. First I want to thank you for your very kind reception of what I had to say to you. I think it is rather like this: When we find expressed by a commonplace author what we have already thought out for ourselves we think that author a fine person !

There are two speeches upon which I should like to remark. Miss Bainbrigge referred to two important points—the Home Teachers and the loss of voluntary writers in local societies. It seems to me both these difficulties can be overcome by a little management. The Home Teacher was spoken of in my paper as being an important medium for the distribution of books to the blind. Mr. Royston pointed this out even more emphatically than I did. His work in Islington is what we look for in our Home Teachers. If Mr. Royston had not taken the course which he did take, we should not have had the success in Islington which we now have.

Miss Bainbrigge said that if a voluntary worker had to send up all books to a central library, such voluntary worker would be apt to lose interest; but I think that could be easily overcome.

The details of my scheme do not matter. The thing is to get the idea.

Mr. Illingworth made practically the same points.

Mr. Bryden said that the paper had shaken his nerves; I think that is something for me to be proud of.

Mr. Stainsby said that if we had a British Museum Library for the Blind it would practically fill the whole of London; but I think he overlooked the fact that in the British Museum the books must remain on the shelves, while ours would be in constant circulation. We should not have room in Bayswater for our 14,000 volumes if they were constantly in the Library; it is because there are so many of them out at the same time that we can house those that are left.

If you take the ideal under your care I think the details can look after themselves.

SIR FRANCIS CAMPBELL (Norwood): I will detain you but a moment. I only think we ought to pass a resolution of thanks to our Chairman before we part, and I hope you will agree with me. And I don't think the matter requires any talking about. I will ask Mr. Wilson to second the resolution.

MR. WILSON: I have much pleasure in seconding this resolution. We had Mr. Snow in the chair this morning at the Exhibition, and I am sure we thank him very much for again coming here this afternoon to help us.

MR. SNOW: I am much obliged to you for what you have said. As far as I can see, a good strong Committee working together can attain the objects that are necessary.

TUESDAY MORNING.

CHAIRMAN: J. G. Owen, Esq., Sheriff of Exeter.

THE CHAIRMAN: Our first business is a particularly pleasant one. I understand that an innovation of this Conference, and one that is likely to become a custom, is that the foreign delegates here—whom you are so glad to welcome, and whom we of Exeter also gladly welcome—would like to present their greetings from their own countries to this Conference.

DIRECTOR MATTHIES (Steglitz): [This gentleman spoke in German and a translation was given by Herr Reusch] Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—First I should like to say you must have great patience. I cannot give you exactly a translation of that which our Director has just said, but I will try to do as well as I can.

He regretted that he cannot speak in the language of Shakespeare, only in the language of Luther, Schiller, and Bismarck; as it is the first time he has been in England. He is astonished to see what is done for the blind in this country, and what the blind here are able to do. He is the representative of the Directors of the Institutions for the Blind in Germany, and is Head Master of an Institution near Berlin, which is one of the largest in Germany. He brings to you the heartiest greetings of the Head Masters of the Institutions in Germany, and he hopes this Conference may be very successful.

MR. ALRIK LUNDBERG (Stockholm): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—In the name of the Royal Board of the Institutions for the Blind of Sweden, and in the name of the Associations and Federations for the Blind in that country, of whom I am the Chairman, I have been asked to bring hearty greetings for the success of this Conference.

I venture to accentuate my conviction that this Third International Conference will turn out to be a worthy link in the chain embracing the globe of generous aspirations for the benefit of the blind.

STATE COUNCILLOR J. KOLOBOVSKY (St. Petersburg): I speak English very badly. I bring you best wishes from the Russian Institutions for the Blind.

Mr. T. Yoshimoto (Japan): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—Yesterday morning I came here, and only one day has passed since then, but I have learnt a great deal, and what I learn here will all be communicated to my fellow-workers in Japan. I may say that they are holding a Conference in Japan as soon as I get back. I had no idea that I should be expected to speak to-day, but just to take advantage of the opportunity I have to say one word: What you are doing here for the blind acts indirectly in a very forcible way upon the work of the blind in other countries, and the work you do here is in many ways a great missionary work in its highest sense. Yesterday morning I was surprised to see what a large army of splendid workers you have—so enthusiastic and expert—for whose work I can find no adequate words of praise. This is not mere flattery, because I am sending a Japanese blind student to this country very soon, because we want workers in Japan: we have not such a large number of workers there. It is not only that the system of organisation is very important, but something more is required, and so I want some of our workers to come to this country and get experience by coming into contact with the workers here, and by visiting your splendid workshops and schools to become expert in the education and treatment of the blind. I am sure all my fellow workers, and the blind themselves, know a great deal already about your work. Perhaps you know something about the blind in Japan, but they know far more about what is going on in this country, and the workers among the blind there know almost everything that is going on in this country. I am sure they are very thankful to you, and would like to express their gratitude for the assistance they have received in the past, through example and otherwise, and it is a great pleasure to have the opportunity of expressing my thanks to you again.

Mr. J. P. Kruger (South Africa): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I have not very much to say. The six thousand miles that I have travelled have taken out of me what I wanted to say. I said last night my head is just swimming with the information I am gathering, and I represent only one school for the blind in South Africa—the only one. It is in Worcester, near Cape Town. As you are aware, our country is very extensive, but the population is very small. We do not count two millions of Europeans in South Africa, and our school has nearly a hundred pupils; but we are trying to keep pace with the work, and that is why I have come—to keep pace with the improvements initiated in this country, and we try to follow them up as

best we can and apply them to our own work as far as practicable I am trying my best in particular to get information on industries for the blind. Arts are alright, literature is alright, as far as it goes, but I look at the practical side of the thing, and I want something more. I am trying to take back with me some knowledge of new industries, although I am a teacher and should perhaps advocate literature more. But in order to help the blind in a practical manner you want something for them to do. Perhaps I am too practical, because I can't see the sentimental side at all.

I am very thankful to those who have spoken from this platform as to helping the blind to become self-supporting and do good to humanity, and not to help them because you pity them. That is no sympathy at all—to help a blind man in the street. Of course I am thankful when they do it, and put me straight in a strange town like this; but at the same time I think the time has come when there should be more *practical* help given to the blind.

I hope that the exhibition which is now on will be well patronised, not only by the members of the Conference, but by this great, historic old City, of which we already know a good deal, and of which I have learnt a great deal here.

I have much more to say, but will not keep you any longer. Thank you very much.

Mr. Norman Andrews (Ontario): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I represent the Ontario Institution for the Blind in Canada, and I stand in a somewhat unique position, inasmuch as, although I come here from Canada, I am a Devonshire man, and also an Exeter man, my parents still residing in Exeter.

I wish to express to you the greetings of the Canadian Institutions for the blind for the success of this Conference, and my commission is to try and find out the best methods you have in this country for helping the blind to help themselves as regards the musical profession. The Education Department in Ontario has taken upon themselves to look into this matter, and they maintain that the musical blind could to a very large extent earn sufficient to maintain themselves. I am glad to say that since I have been in charge of the Music Department of our Institution, we have sent out some first class musicians, and have teachers and organists earing a good living, and I hope—and I have not the slightest doubt—that I shall reap very great benefit from my visit here, and be able to take back something new to assist us when I return to Ontario.

THE CHAIRMAN: There are at least five representatives from the United States, and I should like to ask Mr. Superintendent McAloney to kindly represent them, as he has not been here before.

MR. T. MCALONEY (Pittsburg): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I was hoping that I would not be the one called upon to represent the United States, because all the others are better orators than I. I am certainly very glad to be present here this morning, and to meet so many distinguished Heads of Blind Institutions on this side. I bring you greetings from the Western Pennsylvania Institution for the Blind at Pittsburg, and from those of your profession across the ocean. Although I represent an Institution in America, I do not feel a stranger here. I received my early training in the Belfast Institution for the Blind.

If yesterday was a sample of what we are to receive at this Conference, I shall feel well repaid for coming from Pittsburg.

In America we are keenly interested in the work of the blind in this country, and have been much interested in this Conference. I have come all the way here to try to take back something new, so that we may help the blind in the States.

It is a great pleasure to me to be here and to have this opportunity of taking back something that will help the blind in our country.

MR. COLLINGWOOD (Exeter, Hon. Sec. of Conference): Mr. Chair man, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I purposely left the representative of the United States to speak last, in order to afford me the opportunity of reading a letter brought to me yesterday by State Councillor Kolobovsky, just returned from America, from the members assembled there in Conference a fortnight since.

Letter from the American Association Workers for the Blind.
Eleventh Convention held at Overbrook, 1911.

To the International Conference for the Blind,
Exeter, England.

Gentlemen,—The American Association of Workers for the Blind, with three hundred delegates in attendance at the Pennsylvania Institution at Overbrook, representing one hundred and thirteen Associations, Schools, Societies, and other Organisations for the welfare of the sightless, send greetings and best wishes to our fellow workers of the International Conference for the Blind in session at Exeter, England, to the end that your deliberations may promote a closer co-operation

among the people of all nationalities engaged in ameliorating the condition of the blind. Yours faithfully,

CHARLES F. F. CAMPBELL,
Hon. Secretary.

And now I understand that Herr Reusch is here representing the blind musicians of Germany, and with your permission, Sir, and with the permission of those present, I think he would like to add his greetings.

I would also like to be allowed to read the following resolution sent to me a short time since from the Midland Counties Union, assembled at Coventry on 6th May, 1911, and to add that I also have one from a still larger Union—the Northern Union—couched in similar terms:—

Letter from the Midland Counties Union of Societies and Institutions in aid of the Blind.

The Midland Counties Union of Institutions and Societies in aid of the Blind, assembled at Coventry on Saturday, 6th May, 1911, sends cordial greetings to the Blind International Conference at Exeter, with best wishes for the success of their deliberations and work in so many important questions affecting the welfare of the Blind.

HERR REUSCH (Darmstadt): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—It gives me great pleasure to speak here to-day, and I thank you for this opportunity. My being here will prove to you that we in Germany consider it to be a good thing to come into closer contact with the blind in England. We belong together and we ought to work together, for friends who are united in the struggles of life, I think, are stronger than those who are united in the happiness of life.

I have the honour to greet you as the representative from Germany of the International Conference for the Revision of the Blind Music System. This Committee was founded at the Congress in 1897, and consists of many Continental members. The English member was Sir Francis Campbell, and his successor is Mr. Stainsby.

The President of the Union of Darmstadt, Germany, also desires me to give his heartiest greetings.

In conclusion I have to invite you to our Conference for the Blind in Germany, which will take place in July next year. We should be very much pleased to see some gentlemen from here.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mayor, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—It is a great privilege to me to be permitted to preside over your deliberations to-day.

We in Exeter deeply appreciate your holding the International Conference on the Blind here, and we venture to hope that your selecting Exeter is not so much because it is a convenient centre for pleasure as well as for business, but that it may be regarded to some extent as a recognition of the pioneer work which Exeter has done for the blind. As you know, our Institution for the Blind was founded in the Thirties, that almost pre-historic time when blindness was generally regarded as an affliction to be borne with resignation and without much attempt at palliation. The world then had not advanced far beyond the grim old Biblical attitude, when it was asked, "Who hath sinned, this man or his parents?" Well, we have outgrown that attitude. We recognise that sin is not by any means always the cause of blindness, except the sin of carelessness—a sin which accounts for so much of the terrible miseries of preventable disease; and with that recognition has come a patient desire and determination to do what is possible to mitigate the effects of blindness when it is impossible to remedy the cause.

Cynics contend that the age of miracles is past, but I contend that this is an age of miracles—an age which makes the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and the blind to see, to an extent which would have been thought impossible, and indeed impious, by an earlier generation, It is true that the great Healer no longer walks the earth in lowly guise, laying His fingers upon the eyes of the blind, but His spirit is diffused over the earth, and your presence here to-day (representatives of many countries, speaking divers tongues) is an earnest of the energy with which you seek to reduce the handicap of the blind. It would be presumptuous of me, presiding over such an august assemblage, to pretend that the lack of sight is not a great deprivation; but there are compensations, there are tones of grey even in a grey mist, and the endeavour of all who work for the blind—an endeavour in which you have succeeded so well—is that, by mechanical aid and an intense cultivation of faculties, they are in touch with the intellectual world, and profit by the benefits that life affords, and rise to a higher plane of professional and industrial achievements. Of course one recognises that this effort for the amelioration of the handicap of the blind calls for special qualifications, for special preparation, and it is right that the specialists should receive adequate remuneration for services. It is not for me to pick all the currants out of the bun of the gentleman who

is to read the paper, and I will not pretend to discuss in advance what he proposes to say, but I am in cordial agreement with him, and am looking forward with great interest and curiosity to discover what lines the discussion will take. I rather imagine it will be towards the strengthening of the provisions which the Rev. St. Clare Hill proposes.

I now have pleasure in calling upon him to read his paper.

TEACHERS OF THE BLIND:

Their Training, Qualifications, and Reasonable Prospects of Employment.

By Rev. St. Clare Hill, m.a.,

Principal, Royal School for the Blind, Leatherhead, Surrey.

The magnitude and importance of the subject which I have the honour of introducing to the Conference cannot be exaggerated.

The responsibility of Teachers in general has always been appreciated by those who have written upon the subject; but when one remembers the severe handicap under which the blind have to meet the competitions of life, the value of the teacher's work is considerably enhanced.

John Locke, writing more than 200 years ago, expressed in language forceful and clear his idea of the dignity of the teacher's profession. He speaks of it as—

"a great work":

and points out that it is—

> "to fashion the carriage and form the mind; to settle in his pupil good habits and the principles of virtues and wisdom; to give him by little and little a view of mankind, and work him into a love and imitation of what is excellent and praiseworthy; and in the prosecution of it to give him vigour, activity, and industry."

And continuing to review the character of the education the teacher should present to his pupil, he says—

> "The studies which he sets him upon are but as it were the exercise of his faculties and employment of his time to keep him from sauntering and idleness, to teach him application and accustom him to take pains, and to give him some little test of what his own industry must perfect."

I have quoted the great educationalist at length for two reasons :

1. To make it clear from the very introduction of my paper that I am thinking of education in its larger and broader sense.

2. To render it evident that I am desirous of viewing the teacher, not as a literary potentiality, but as an influence to induce and develop those principles which are calculated to turn out those who are fitted to meet the world of commerce and utility ; the lot of the majority of the blind with which we have mostly to do.

Perhaps the work of teachers in dealing with a blind lad may be briefly expressed in the words—

> "an endeavour to make a good healthy-minded enterprising man of him."

And this I am convinced is what educationalists unanimously conceive to be true education.

Canon Daniel, the late Principal of the Battersea Training College, says—

> "The true test of a system of education is not the number of genuises produced under it, but what it does for the child of average capability and application."

When one reflects that this is the work of the teacher and that a failure in the work means not only a failure in the life of the teacher, but a failure in another life, which in turn will operate upon other lives, there is a responsibility which must overbear everyone who has elected to take his place in the world as a teacher. And with such a feeling, comes to the conscientious a desire to be as well-fitted as possible.

It immediately occurs to one that that fitness can be obtained by two recognised means, namely—Personal Qualification and Training.

Let me address myself to each of these —

1. Personal Qualification.

It will occur to many of my audience that to carry on the work of a teacher on the lines that I have above indicated, personal literary qualifications need not be of an exceptional nature.

There is something higher and better for the education in which we are just now interested than mere personal literary capability. That something was described by Dr. Fitch in the following words—

> "In the case of a schoolmaster, as in that of the priest or of the statesman, mind and character have to be influenced; and it is found that, in the long run, nothing can influence character like character."

Supported by such an eminent and practical teacher as a former Senior Chief Inspector of the Board of Education, I have no hesitation in stating that the first qualification of a teacher is character. The man to make a man of his pupil must be a man, and the woman to make a woman of her pupil must be a woman. There must be that

individuality and high principled force which will both appeal to and compel those upon whom the teacher is about to operate.

I am again supported in this opinion by many of those who so kindly replied to my questionnaire. Several of those stated that personality was by them considered of more importance than any other qualification.

But I am most anxious not to appear to minimise the value of personal literary attainments in the teacher. I have spoken first of the individuality of character because I am assured that given every other qualification, with the absence of this the teacher's work must be a failure. But having said that, I hasten to state that every teacher should give earnest attention to the stock of his personal knowledge, so that he may be equipped to offer food of such a nature as will satisfy the most voracious intellect which may be committed to his care.

It is a most serious handicap to a teacher if there exists an insufficiency of knowledge to deal with the subjects he has to teach. It hampers both him and his pupils. More than once I have witnessed a teacher edging round a subject to cover his own personal ignorance, with the effect of producing a nervousness and lack of assurance which are very quickly discovered by the pupil, who therefrom develops a feeling of doubt and absence of confidence, which are fatal to the best relationship.

For these and other reasons I desire to insist upon the advisability and necessity on the part of teachers to gain knowledge; and further to have the comforting assurance of the possession of that knowledge by securing diplomas and certificates worthy of the profession they represent.

Governing Bodies and Educational Authorities, recognising the value of such evidences of proficiency, exact from their teachers the possession of such guarantees of personal knowledge.

The Board of Education sets forth in Chapters II. and III. of the "Regulations applicable to the Schools for the Blind," the nature of the qualifications they require in Schools which hold their certificate, and as a step in advance of these Regulations, the Board of Education now requires a dual qualification, namely—

An Academic and a Professional.

The Academic requirement can be satisfied by holding the certificate for Trained or Untrained Teachers.

And the Professional by passing the examination of the College of Teachers for the Blind, or the special course for Training Colleges as set forth in Chapter VII. of the Training College Regulations

It is thus evident that a double qualification is required by which the teacher testifies to a certain literary capability and also a knowledge of those special systems of education which are deemed necessary in a Blind School.

2. Training.

A teacher may have a good knowledge of his subject and a good acquaintance with the approved methods of offering that information to Blind pupils, but still more is required if the teacher's efforts are to be crowned with success.

He must have proved by personal experience how to approach his pupils and how to surmount the many difficulties which from time to time present themselves.

This he can best acquire under the guidance of those who have spent years in the work, in short by being trained to his work.

The Royal Normal College has done much valuable work in this direction, as also the Schools which are scattered up and down the country, notably Sheffield, where Mr. Maddocks carries on a system of training young teachers of the blind in accordance with methods which have repeatedly received the approval of H.M. Inspector of Schools.

But the opportunities for the training of teachers who are to find their mission in Blind Schools deserve much extension.

The exhibition of weak teaching power which has been witnessed by those who examine in this subject compels one to speak forcibly as to the advantages and even necessity of offering facilities in this direction.

Some of the replies to my questionnaire indicate that many of our younger teachers are keenly anxious for at least a year's training in the art of imparting instruction to the blind, but the difficulty of making such provision is not easy to surmount.

Still, I would urge a study of the problem, and, personally, I am hopeful that a time will arrive when the solution may be forthcoming.

Teachers in schools for the sighted enjoy a course of training largely at the cost of the State, and just as that problem which once upon a time was considered hopeless has been solved, so we may venture to conclude it will with that one associated with teachers in the Schools for the Blind.

Moreover, I would add that if training for teachers in ordinary Schools is found a worthy venture for State finance, surely a similar course of preparation for teachers in special schools deserves consideration. And yet again, both the necessity and advantage are more evident when the duties require expert capabilities to overcome special difficulties.

Whatever may be the present problems associated with the question of the training of teachers in Schools for the Blind, I contend that they should not be met with a too ready negative. There is room for hope and enthusiasm, to the end that at least steps may be taken in the direction which would eventually bring great benefits to those of our brethren who, in the wisdom of Providence are handicapped in the competition of life.

The third section of the subject has to do with the hope of employment of teachers who seek their sphere of labour in our Schools.

Some of the replies to my questionnaire suggest there is no congestion in this labour market. With all due respect I venture to differ in my opinion.

It is true that for the more experienced and well qualified candidate for employment the congestion is not severe, but that is because, unfortunately for the education of the Blind there are many would-be teachers who, as yet have but meagre qualifications and the smallest, if any, experience.

Among these inexperienced and poorly qualified teachers there is at present more than a little difficulty in finding employment. Some will say this is well. They will argue that there should not be ready facilities for such to occupy positions of so much importance as those of teachers. To this I agree. But there has been a remarkable upward movement among our teachers during the last ten years, and I believe the time is not distant when this difficulty for well qualified and experienced teachers will be acute. Those of us who are acquainted with the rapid strides of improvement in our teachers look forward with some anxiety when the difficulty of which I speak will have the effect of deterring valuable and

promising material from offering themselves for employment in our Schools.

This serious disadvantage to the Education of the Blind has already been felt by blind teachers. Many competent and worthy men and women who have expended both time and money in preparing themselves have considerable difficulty in obtaining posts in our Schools.

And in this I maintain there is a sad loss; for many of these teachers would be valuable assets to our teaching staff. I go so far as to say there is a work to be done in our Schools which is the special province of blind teachers. For instance, reading and writing of Braille, as also the manipulation of the special arithmetic board are more successfully taught by a blind teacher, and because such a teacher enters more entirely into the difficulties which the pupil has to meet. In ninety per cent. of the classes where I have found the best reading and writing the teacher has been blind.

It would be an evil day for our special education if no place were found in our Schools for competent Blind teachers. With such there is nearly always more sympathy, more enthusiasm and consequently more success.

Several of the replies to my questionnaire point out some of the limitations of blind teachers, but not a few refer to the valuable work which has been and is still being done by them.

A School judiciously organised will provide a place where successful and enthusiastic blind men and women can give their services to help pupils with their own experience and indomitable perseverance.

To meet the difficulty associated with the chance of employment it has been suggested that a bureau should be established where employer and those hoping for employment may negotiate an agreement.

We are all most anxious not to increase unnecessary departments, all of which mean some expenditure, but the suggestion found in one reply that such may form a special department in some already established Institution, as, for instance, the British and Foreign Blind Association deserves more than ordinary consideration.

If this were called into existence those seeking employment would have their qualifications, experience, and recommendation duly registered for the ready information of those who are seeking teachers.

We are aware that this is, to a limited extent, already in existence, but there would be a great advantage in such a bureau being fully recognised and more generally used.

I should like to refer briefly to the salaries paid to our teachers. Of course this is a matter which requires careful handling, especially as some schools have to be conducted under great financial limitations; but it is my opinion that the efficiency, and therefore the success, of many of our schools would be materially increased by offering such remuneration as would secure the services of the best possible quality of teacher.

There are Schools where the salary offered is of the most meagre kind, and it very frequently follows that the results are commensurate with the stipend offered.

I would press yet another point in this connection. The character of the work in our special Schools is of the most exacting and exhausting nature, making more than ordinary demands upon the individuals concerned. Such should always be remembered in the financial department of an Institution.

In some Schools I find the scale of salary is based upon that which is given to teachers in the Schools for the sighted, and in others where there is no serious financial

difficulty there is allowed a small additional amount in recognition of the special nature of the services demanded.

In others again board and residence are given to compensate for certain duties which are connected with the charge of pupils after school hours.

But whatever system is adopted, I would suggest that in assessing the remuneration offered the Governors should not forget two points :—

1. The work is of a special kind.
2. The duties make more demand upon the energy and devotion of the teacher.

The last point to which I desire to direct your attention is one which has had an intimate effect upon the teacher in the spirit of his daily work.

To secure success the teacher's mind must be at rest when he reflects upon what is to happen to him in the day of failing health and lessened capabilities in consequence of age. If the future holds out to him some hope of absence from anxiety and worry, he will more entirely devote himself to the task he has in hand. If for his old age there is a promise of some meed of comfort, then with special energy will he direct his mind and his efforts to do his best in the present moment.

For this reason I am desirous of seeing established some scheme for the pension of those faithful and devoted souls who have given to the country of their best and of their efficiency.

It has been suggested that a contributing scheme would best meet the case, and there is much to say for it. The principles of thrift suggest a contribution, and the large majority of our teachers would be more than willing

to deny themselves to that extent in order to be relieved of those anxieties which are usually associated with the contemplation of old age limitations.

Our Institutions generally are not sufficiently well off to establish a Pension Scheme of their own, but in a few educational establishments an attempt has been made to meet the question.

In one School for the Blind the following scheme has been adopted:—The Institution Authority granted an increase in salary to a worthy and trusted officer on the understanding that it should be used towards the purchase of an Annuity. The officer made his contribution, and so by the combined action of employed and employer an arrangement was made by which a comfort is secured for the declining years.

But, independently of the Institutions, I would ask you to think of an organization which is already in existence in this country. It is some years now since the Civil Service Scheme of Pensions was established. And we are ever hearing of the advantages gained by it.

But surely the work done by the teachers in our Schools compares favourably with the labour of many now employed in the Civil Service Departments. I venture to think that it is impossible to over estimate the value of the influence of a good teacher on the rising generation.

When one reflects upon the expectation of failure which confronts the life of the majority of our blind, and then examines the remarkable instances of independence, self-reliance and success which have been the outcome of the excellent efforts of education obtained in our Schools and Institutions, it is impossible to apprise lightly the work of our teachers.

It is a work for the State, it is a gift to the community,

and such noble self-sacrifice and genuine devotion to the afflicted deserve the consideration which is found to be so admirable in the Civil Service Offices of our Government.

The salaries paid to our teachers do not give the opportunity of adequately providing for the future, and that being so, together with the value of the service rendered to the community at large, it appears to me not too much to expect consideration at the hands of those who have been so nobly served.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am sure we all appreciate Mr. St. Clare Hill's very suggestive paper. The discussion on it is to be led by Mr. W. H. Illingworth, and after he has opened the discussion there will be a general discussion; but I would like to impress upon prospective speakers that after the expiration of eight minutes the bell will be rung, and then two minutes afterwards the time limit will have come and the closure will be applied.

MR. W. H. ILLINGWORTH: I would like at the outset to say that if I express myself very strongly it is because I feel very strongly in the interests of the whole blind community, and feel very deeply what I say; and secondly because a Conference such as this is of little value if there is not something done to stir up those who do not take an interest in the discussion, to induce them to do so.

Whilst the excellent paper which we have just had the pleasure of listening to is fairly comprehensive of its subject—and I beg in your name and my own to thank the author for it—I must admit that I am somewhat disappointed that he has not emphasised one or two strong points a little more, because I appreciate his ability and the uniqueness of his opportunities as H.M. Inspector, for observing the weaknesses of the existing system and vogue, and whatever he says comes with more authority than it can do from others. Yet, after all, one of the chief aims of the papers read at this Conference is to provoke discussion, and I feel it an honour to be called upon to speak first on this paper.

Prior to my seeing Mr. Hill's manuscript, I had prepared some notes for my speech, and it is somewhat remarkable under the circumstances that I had put down as the essential qualifications which should be required in a teacher of the young blind as:—

1. Enthusiasm for the work.
2. Originality.
3. Power of adaptation to the child mind.
4. Infinite patience and perseverance.
5. Bright and cheerful personality.
6. Polite manner.
7. Common sense.

You will probably be struck by the fact that I have not mentioned in my perfect numer of seven requisite qualifications a single one asked for in the Board of Education Schedule of Requirements. But I say, most emphatically, "Give me the teacher, qualified as

above, and I will gladly forego all the Nature Knowledge, Natural Science, and all the 'ics' and 'ologies' of Mr. Runciman's Twentieth Century Code."

As the Rev. St. Clare Hill says: "The first qualification requisite in a teacher is 'Character,'" and the true teacher is, and remains to the end of his days, a *student of character.*

It is alone by the careful study of the individuality and character of his pupil that the teacher—especially of the blind—can obtain the best resnlts, and, conversely, give to his pupil that which his specific case requires for his fullest development and potentiality.

The existing cast-iron system of codes and regulations—which would seem to infer that all children are cast in the same mould both as regards physique and intellect—cannot fail to be detrimental both to taught and teacher, and has for too many years been a hindrance to true education.

The present outcry from Headquarters, and insistence on the employment of *Trained* Teachers only, is another matter to be deeply deplored. "What!" says someone, "Don't you agree that a trained teacher is superior to one not so trained?" My reply is "Yes" and "No."

No! Most emphatically concerning a large percentage of the average Training College product, who sit for two or three years hearing lectures on a multitude of subjects, which they seldom assimilate; and spending at most a few hours per week in practical contact with the practice of teaching—and mark you, even a Training College cannot *make* teachers! There are far too many people who forget that fact. It may develop the faculty to a certain extent in those who already are born teachers—the only real teachers—but do you not agree that the training is much more likely to be efficient if done in a good school where the candidate will spend most of his time in child study and teaching, and where he can have the benefit of occasional lectures and object lessons from experts in his particular branch of education?

In my humble opinion the sooner we revert to the old pupil teacher system of five years' apprenticeship the better it will be for the country.

Again, we have far too little school examination. I am confident that our Blind Schools would do infinitely more and better work if they saw more of the Board of Education's Examiner. An hour with each class in a school twice a year would not be too much. In justice, I say, both to the teacher and his employer, is

this desirable.—To the teacher, that his work may be recorded by the Board of Education; and to the employer, that defective teachers may be reported on as such. At present there are far too many men and women occupying places as teachers, both in Blind and Elementary Schools, who never ought to have been there at all. They have simply gone in for the profession as a nice, respectable way of earning a living: they have no talent as instructors, and no enthusiasm for the work.

Such teachers are continually suffering from ennui—tell you they find Institution life depressing and a terrible tax on their nervous energies, etc.; are more interested in their "time off duty" than in preparing less ons for their young charges, and in football, golf, or the theatre than in school. They find "Braille" an awful bogey, and playing with their pupils a bore. I say we should be rid of all such.

The inculcation of good manners and polite bearing is also a most important factor in the success or non-success of a blind worker, and in view of this it is not advisable to employ teachers who hold the views of the rabid socialist.

Again, if we wish for the best—and most of us do—in the way of teachers, we must be prepared to pay them. So long as an ordinary artisan can command better remuneration than the average teacher, we cannot hope to secure the services of skilful and energetic young men and women in the teaching profession. The nation is only just rousing to the realisation of the fact that the care of, and building up of, the character of its children is of greater importance than the building of its houses; yes, or even of its fleet.

Here I would emphasise Mr. Hill's contention with regard to pensions. State pensions for teachers! "There is something rotten in the State of Denmark!" We provide State pensions for the officers of our Prisons, Army, Navy, Customs, Excise, and so forth. A thousand times more should we do so for those who have character-forming of the people in their hands.

Someone says, "Let them save their own pensions." Why some of our teachers do not receive as big a salary as even a Cabinet Minister! And is he expected to save his own pension?

I hope to hear a good deal to-day on the snbject of Blind Teachers. As many of you are aware, I am a strong advocate for their employment, but only when they are naturally suited for the work.

I read a paper at the Paris Congress in 1900, on this subject, and as I there treated it fairly exhaustively, and many of you no doubt read my paper, I will not repeat myself here.

There is very little indeed of the work required that a smart blind teacher cannot do, and do well. I know several who are capital, even at out of school supervision. Eyesight is not the only sense required for the efficient fulfilment of this duty.

I must be frank, however: and I do not favour the employment of blind men or women as Head Teachers, as Senior Teachers of Music, or as the only Teacher of Music where one only is provided. I will not give my reasons here for this reservation, for lack of time, but I will be glad to answer any questions. The prospect of the blind teacher has been much darkened by the arrogance of some members of his profession who refuse to admit their limitations.

It may interest you to know that at Henshaw's Blind Asylum, in our Elementary and Music School, out of a Teaching Staff of thirteen, five are totally blind and one semi-blind.

The Rev. St. Clare Hill has not touched upon the question of employing women teachers only in our junior schools. There are many points in favour of this policy, and I hope to hear it discussed. With the employment of a good Male Resident Teacher for Technical work, and a refined Male Attendant for the boys, the necessary night supervision can easily be efficiently carried out.

Lastly, I would just mention the difficulties of the teacher who has to deal with feeble-minded blind. Such children require special care and treatment, and are better treated at such a school as Miss Meiklejon's, at St. Leonards-on-Sea. Special training is required for a teacher to become successful in this important branch of work.

In conclusion, I look upon Rev. St. Clare Hill's subject as one of the most important before Conference, and I sincerely hope the discussion will be thorough, extensive, and to the point.

Mr. W. M. Stone (Edinburgh): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—When this subject was proposed at our Executive Committee as one for discussion at this Confernece, I frankly admit that I did not care very much for it, and that to some extent I opposed its being placed on our programme.

It seemed to me, and it still seems to me, that it is a subject

more fitting for those engaged purely in educational work, because they alone can thoroughly understand it, while the greater part of the delegates and members of this Conference are not engaged in school work at all. It would have been an admirable subject for a gathering of teachers, but at these Conferences the teachers are conspicuously absent. (Cries of "No, no" and "Yes, yes.")

I must first congratulate the reader of the paper and the opener of the discussion, and I wish to say that I think they did their parts admirably; but still they are not themselves engaged actively in teaching, although they undertake the supervision of education. (Mr. Illingworth and the Rev. St. Clare Hill were understood to dissent from this observation). (I understood Mr. Illingworth to say that he hoped this would lead to discussion! Of course, I am aware that the supervision of education is a part of their many duties.) Will you, therefore, grant me some indulgence if, speaking as one whose chief work is education, I beg to differ very largely from what these gentlemen have said; and, may be, say things in antagonism to the opinions of the majority here.

I have, in one way or another, met a great many of the teachers in our Blind Schools, and have not formed with regard to them quite the opinion that Mr. Illingworth has expressed; I have not found them anxious to run away from their duties to play golf or football. They were for the most part devoted and earnest workers, and in fact were inclined to give too much of their leisure time to their pupils. I have frequently, in my position of Head Master, had to step in and order them to take more leisure. At the same time, however, it has to be admitted that many teachers are lamentably lacking in qualifications. I will come to that presently.

Mr. St. Clare Hill spoke about character—about what he calls the personal qualification—character. Of course, in teaching circles that is acknowledged to be true. It has been admitted for I don't know how many years. But whilst character is in almost every walk of life the great and chief qualification, you must not neglect the special training. In fact it seems to me that a strong personality without training may be a most dangerous thing. Mr. Illingworth adds some views which, in my opinion, would have been more appropriate if they had been produced by the Town Clerk out of the Museum when we pay him our visit on Wednesday next. Really it is difficult to meet these opinions, for they have been killed and buried long ago. The talk about going back to

the old pupil-teacher system—the talk about the superiority in many cases of untrained teachers—I can hardly find terms strong enough to condemn such language. If Mr. Illingworth would read only the first chapter—I will not ask him to read more, but only the first chapter—of Professor Adams' "Herbartian Psychology," he will find the whole question summed up in these words: "As for your teachers, 'by the grace of God'—the born teachers—they are impossible." As you all know, in the great bulk of our day schools, in nine-tenths of them, only trained certificated teachers are allowed; at any rate, I can speak of Scotland, where education is supposed to be valued very highly, and by the School Board of Edinburgh the untrained teacher is not engaged. That is the standard we should have in our Blind Schools. I may mention here that in my own school at West Craigmillar, every teacher, blind and seeing, is certificated, and I think if we insisted on that we should get over the difficulty with regard to pensions, for then "these poor devoted souls" would receive their Government pension at 60 or 65 years of age.

(A voice: How much?)

(Mr. Stone: It is increasing; at present I know it is exceedingly small, but we in Scotland are showing you the way in this matter. According to the regulations recently issued in Scotland, it is to be two-thirds of the salary, and like many other things, when it has been tried in Scotland it is to be extended to England.)

There is only one other point I wish to touch upon, and I shall have to condense it as much as possible. We want to draw the best class of teachers into this work, but we never shall unless we can give them some reasonable prospect of promotion. How are you going to get a thoroughly efficient master when he has no prospect before him of taking the responsible and absolute control of the school in which he is engaged? All certificated teachers have the hope that some day they will be entirely responsible for the work under their charge, but in many of our schools the Head Master is not responsible to his Directors—has not the opportunity of putting himself forward and doing his work entirely himself—but he is under another. A Head Master should be responsible only to his own Directors. I don't like to refer too much to West Craigmillar, but I think we have the best arrangement there. The Head Master is responsible for his own work, and is responsible only to his Directors. I should have liked to go on further with this point, but the time is too short. I feel, however, until that

principle is introduced into all our schools you will not get the best class of men.

Now a word of tribute to blind teachers. Three-fifths of my staff are blind teachers, and I would not part with one of them. When Mr. St. Clare Hill asked the question, "What do you find the limitations of blind teachers to be?" my answer was, "I have found no limitations at all."

THE CHAIRMAN: I perceive that the discussion is not likely to lack liveliness. I will call upon Mr. Littlewood of Liverpool to continue it.

MR. LITTLEWOOD (Liverpool): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—You have already heard three speakers on the subject, but I am not in agreement with any of these. In Mr. St. Clare Hill's paper, for which I should like to take this opportunity of thanking him, I do not think he has distinguished enough between the blind and seeing teachers. As far as the blind are concerned, I quite agree with Mr. Hill; their training could be more complete, their facilities more extended, and their lot improved in many ways.

My remarks chiefly concern the seeing teachers, because the majority of teachers in our schools are seeing. In the first place I feel strongly that no seeing teacher should be admitted into a blind school without being specially qualified before coming in. It is not the place to gain experience. We do not want those who have tried a number of occupations, but have failed at all, and think that the blind will be a nice class of people to experiment on. I have had this kind of teacher —at least I have had one; I am glad to say no more. But the blind require the best of the teachers, not the worst. Also I strongly object to the blind schools being practising schools where teachers may gain experience. The training of teachers, I think, should be done in the ordinary schools. A teacher should go thoroughly through the whole of the elementary methods of instruction, and should not have been a failure but a star in that line; then he may go in for the special work with the blind. I think it is a mistake to set up, or to endeavour for a moment to set up, any other method of training teachers of the blind, the deaf, or defectives. The only training ground is the ordinary elementary school.

Of course, we often hear a great deal about "the teaching profession." I wish it were more of a "profession" and not so much of a trade. I am afraid since the Act came into force we have taken a wrong stand. We have gone to the wrong end of the profession. We

want to place ourselves at the advanced point of qualifications, experience, adaptability, and all the other things, and if we could only do that I think the managers would be compelled to pay a decent salary and to get the best teachers, and the work of the blind throughout the country would be the better for it. We are partly to blame ourselves as to the low standard that some schools are taking in regard to teachers. The prospects of increase and promotion are small, and will be so until we get a better class of teachers. I do not see why a seeing teacher should be tied to a school for the blind; if he has come from an ordinary elementary school, I think it would be legitimate for him to go back again. The teacher would not suffer, and the blind would vastly benefit. I think the fault is that the teachers do not keep in touch with the up-to-date methods, codes, suggestions, etc., of the elementary schools. I think it would be a great deal better for the blind and the teachers if the latter were to interchange a little more and get more experience, after a certain time, among ordinary seeing teachers and children. They would go back to the seeing work with wider views, and would come back to the blind again with fresh ideas and fresh methods, and there would be a general improvement all round. I think this point is well worth our consideration.

Mr. McAlony (Pittsburg): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—In America we believe in treating the blind very much like the seeing, and the education of the blind differs very little from the education of the seeing. We select our teachers as a rule from the public schools. They must be graduates either of normal schools or colleges, which ensures training and the ability to teach. We go further; we generally select those who are successful in work in the public schools, and take a personal interest in their pupils. A teacher who has not a personal interest in his pupils is not worth employing in an Institution. We have no special training schools for teachers of the blind in America. A good public school teacher in a few weeks could become familiar with the apparatus used for teaching the blind. We believe in selecting teachers who are willing to work and who take an interest in their work. A teacher who will do only the amount of duty specified in the rules is a very poor Institution person, and we expect our teachers to take a personal interest in everything connected with the school.

The matter of blind teachers was spoken of by Mr. Hill, and in my 26 years' experience in work for the blind I wish to bear testimony to the faithfulness of blind teachers. In Pittsburg we employ a certain

percentage of qualified blind teachers. I agree with Mr. Illingworth that only those thoroughly qualified should be employed, because our blind pupils need the best instruction they can get. You will never get the best men and women in this country to stay in your schools as teachers without sufficient recompense. The work of educating the blind is perhaps the most arduous work we can undertake; I have had much experience, and know just how arduous the duties are and how small the recompense. If the teachers received adequate compensation there would be no need of pensions.

Another thing to which I think Mr. Illingworth referred was the training of teachers to deal with the feeble-minded blind. Now, in America we believe blindness to be secondary to feeble-mindedness, and we send such children to schools for the feeble-minded. We do not believe in them associating with the blind in any school, nor in having special schools for them; their place we believe to be in Institutions or Schools for the Feeble-Minded.

I am glad that this subject has been so thoroughly discussed, and I believe it will do much good for the teachers on this side of the water.

Sir Francis Campbell (Norwood): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—In the first instance, if you will excuse me, I wish to ask all those delegates who are coming to London after the Conference, to let me know what day it will be most convenient for them to come and see the Royal Normal College. Our Prize Festival is on July 15th, and I shall be very glad to see you on that day.

In regard to the paper, I think I had better ask Lady Campbell to speak, because I know she is much better informed on this subject than I am.

Lady Campbell: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—Really, I think it is most unfair to call upon me now, because I shall have an opportunity of speaking on Thursday, and did not intend to do so this morning. But there are one or two points I should like to emphasise. The first is the necessity for trained teachers. I quite agree with Mr. Littlewood. If you have a teacher who has been well trained to deal with sighted children, in a short time she will adapt herself to the methods required for teaching the blind. I believe the best course to be pursued by a

Superintendent wishing for a teacher, is to make enquiries and find out a teacher ranking high in an Elementary School, go and see her work, and if it is satisfactory, secure her.

Then in regard to pupil teachers; it is very well for the pupil teachers, but what about the children they experiment upon? I am sorry for them. I think there is growing up too great a tendency to regard blind children as a different species from ordinary children. In so many things they require the same incentive, the same course of instruction, the same means for arousing interest, and the real teacher, who has been successful with sighted children, knows the best way in which that interest can be aroused.

I wish to thank Rev. St. Clare Hill for his words in regard to the blind teachers, for when thoroughly trained, there are many things that they can teach better than the sighted teachers, and their influence and example are an incentive to the pupils which lasts them throughout life.

Mr. Ritchie (Manchester): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I think we must all be grateful to Mr. Hill for beginning his paper on the high ground of educational theory. I agree with him and with Mr. Illingworth when they speak of the improvement that has taken place of late years in our teachers, but I do not think we have yet got to a time when we can afford to stand still and shake hands with ourselves. There is still need for further improvement. In the appointment of teachers at the present time, the Institutions are far too apt to take the cheap article and to engage unqualified men or women; then they insist that the man or woman in question shall qualify for the Board of Education's recognition. That is a weak plan. You are working backwards and not reaching the goal, because though your candidate may qualify himself for recognition by the Board of Education, he does not attain to professional efficiency. How can he? Mr. Hill spoke of the certificates he will need. The professional qualification he obtains by a knowledge of Braille, etc., the academic standing required by the Board of Education, is the qualification of an uncertificated teacher, and that is simply the general education possessed by an ordinary boy passing out of a good secondary school. The science and art of Education does not appear in the scheme.

Now in a good deal that I am going to say I shall be speaking against my chief (Mr. Illingworth), but we have argued on these matters before and still remain good friends.

I disagree with Mr. Hill entirely in that he puts far too big a separation between the teacher of the ordinary child and the teacher of the blind. The ordinary trained and certificated teacher is 95 per cent. qualified already for teaching the blind. He must adapt his methods, but it is only an adaptation of the same principles. The theory and practice of education cannot be picked up; it is a thing for which a special training is demanded, and if our Institutions—as they have done and are still doing—do not demand that training from their teachers, they are handing over the education of the blind to men and women who do not know their business. It is unlikely that a man without qualifications will pick up his professional efficiency after getting a position in a blind school. It is not impossible, but it is improbable, and the improbability is great. A blind scholar must be equipped for the battle of life by being trained in the most suitable trade or profession, but what I say is, that you cannot gauge the school's success upon that level alone; the end and aim of education must be ethical, and not commercial or financial, and you cannot weigh up the ethical education of a school in pounds, shillings, and pence. Let me insist again that these factors, though they may be more or less incalculable, are the most important, and you cannot secure them without the best and most highly trained teachers. You may get a scholar on in mental arithmetic or basket making under the inferior teaching, but the deeper meaning of education must for ever remain a closed book both to teacher and pupil alike.

To me it is such a self-evident fact that the best teachers—the men who have been taught their business—will be the best for blind schools that further reference hardly seems necessary.

The next point is, how are you going to get competent teachers? The answer is simplicity itself—pay for them. It will be the truest economy in the end. Education on the cheap is not education at all in any real sense of the word; it is dear at any price.

Take another simple instance of what I want to get at. If you fall into legal difficulties you do not go to a pettifogger; if you fall into physical difficulties you do not go to a quack; and so on. And I contend that the cases are exactly analagous; so, if you want to train the minds and characters of your children with knowledge and with power, you must go to the men who are fitted for the task.

We have heard a great deal from Mr. St. Clare Hill and Mr. Illingworth about personality, enthusiasm and zeal, and with all this I heartily agree; but how are you going to get them? Take a practical case: you are about to appoint a teacher; well, the candidate who

cannot summon up a little show of personality and zeal does not know how to apply for a job. But on the other hand, you won't get a fully qualified man to apply for a place in a blind school unless he feels that he wants to go there and has the personality and enthusiasm to make him a successful teacher. And once again, still harping on the same string, I think the best prospect for teachers is to bring into closer relationship the wide field of general education, and our particular field of blind education; get the best men from the ordinary schools into our work. Their experience in blind schools will not disqualify them from being transferred back into the ordinary work when a good position is offered to them, and so our teachers will not feel that they have slipped into a backwater of the educational stream. They will rather make of it the most fascinating and absorbing region in that great and varied stream. We do not want a special training college, we do not want a special pension fund, because the teachers will then be eligible for superannuation, and though that is only £40 a year at the age of 65, still it is better than would be got by a private scheme of our own, and it is a scheme which is bound to improve.

Miss Garaway (London): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen, —I wish to associate myself very much with what Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Stone and Lady Campbell have said so very ably: that we must have the best teachers we can get, and that we can find them most easily among those already qualified for teaching in ordinary schools. But they *must* be well qualified, and the root of all our troubles lies in the old evil, the want of money. We can never expect to get those teachers unless sufficiently good salaries are offered to enable them to accept posts in schools for the blind, so that they will not lose what they would have gained in other work. And looking at the teachers that we have, both blind and seeing, I think you will bear me out that it is among the blind teachers at the present time that we often find the most adequately trained—not because the others are not obtainable, but because the inducements are not high enough, and they will not take up this special work without such inducements; for our blind friends, the competition is not so keen. The salaries of teachers will have to be increased, and the salaries of blind teachers increased in consequence.

Mr. Illingworth appeared to reflect upon the devotion of teachers in schools for the blind. I should like to say that I think that, rather than too little, there is too much devotion on their part. Teachers of the blind, and the seeing too, are only human, and cannot stand the strain of teaching for long hours unless they have sufficient and

adequate rest and recreation; they often do far too much and rest far too little. They would be more capable of doing better work if they had less to do. I would like to urge that it is essential to the welfare of the school for the teachers to be kept fresh, and that can only be done by a considerable amount of change. It is, I think, most essential that teachers should have a fair amount of rest and recreation if they are to do their work properly; I know what the work means. And I would urge strongly on all teachers that they should not do too much voluntary work. I agree with those who have spoken that voluntary devotion is beyond all payment. It is a thing that we cannot buy, and we have no right to accept too much of it. It is not fair to the teachers; they will give it, but you have no right to demand it.

I have one more point, and that is with regard to the certificated teacher. The need for special training would disappear if we had such adequately trained teachers as have been spoken of this morning. The small amount of special training necessary would be very easily overcome, for all the spade-work would be done first.

Mr. W. H. Illingworth: I would like to say that some of the speakers since my opening of the discussion seem to infer that I wished to cast a reflection on the enthusiasm and attention to duty of our teachers. If you will recollect, what I said was that the products of the training college are not always good, that many ought never to have gone there, and such unsuitable teachers getting into a school are the ones who neglect their duty; at least that is what I intended to convey.

Mr. Gribben (Paisley): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I am extremely sorry that this paper was not put into my hands last night, so that I might speak with some conciseness and consecutiveness upon the matter. I want to confess at once that I am very much afraid, now that I find myself on this platform. There have been so many great ones before me—many who seem to me like the principals of training colleges and institutions rather than those associated with humble teaching work.

I can see nothing whatever in Mr. Hill's paper which would not be equally applicable to teachers of seeing children. He does not deal in a special way with teachers of the blind. Now I expected to find Mr. Hill's paper quite different. The title says, "The prospects of employment of blind teachers." What I thought was that it would give some statistics as to the qualifications of blind teachers now employed, as to

how many are employed, and what their remuneration is for their work.

At the opening of the Exhibition yesterday the genial Mayor of this delightful little City pointed to the history of the world in the past, and spoke of what blind men had done in ages gone by in the business and prosperity of the world. Now I agree to this extent—that blindness does not unfit a man to fill a useful place in society. He is unfit for some things: he cannot shoot a bird on the wing, or steer our American friends back safely across the Atlantic, but he is fit for certain work in the world. I do not know to what extent this principle is admitted among a certain class of members of the Conference; because, somehow or other, I do not believe that it is accepted by them all. Well, I must say now that if I do not speak so academically as some of my predecessors, and say some things more of fact than of sentiment, perhaps you will forgive me. Just take my word, I am not a rabid Socialist—I just simply come from Paisley. We have the misfortune there to be all Radicals, or weavers, or poets—but I am neither. I was a poet in my early days, but that time has gone by.

What I want to say is that surely there are blind men and women who, after all the training and education given to the blind, are capable of filling places of trust and responsibility.

(Now, Ladies and Gentlemen. will you allow me to ask you not to applaud? There was only the space of eight minutes when I commenced, and now there are but two of those minutes left,)

I do not mean to maintain that among us there are a great many who have the organising faculty of Sir Francis Campbell or of Mr. Fawcett, and I am sure there are few with the learning and thought and literary genius of the Rev. George Matheson and John Milton; but there are men of intellectual capacity, of physical energy, and it is not fair that the blind should be condemned to inaction and inenergy; we want to do our part of the work. What is the course of a blind man's life? If he goes into society and wishes to enjoy love and friendship, how is he to do it? He cannot get sufficient remuneration to live as decently and as comfortably as a carter, and if the truth was known, your so-called blind teachers are most of them "passing rich on £40 a year." Of course there are exceptions to that. I have heard that in some Societies they pay their teachers a fair salary. Matthew Arnold asks, "What is the course of the life of mortal men on the earth?" Our Scotch bard answers the question much better than Matthew Arnold. He says that the aim of a man's life is

"To mak' a happy fireside cline
For bairns and wife,
That's the true pathos and sublime
O' human life."

Now will you tell me how many occupations there are that the blind are engaged in where a blind man can afford to keep a wife?

At the last Conference at Manchester, Mr. Dixon (of Oxford) is reported to have said—at least the Scotch papers so reported—that in matters of love and marriage the blind man had to play the part of a lady and wait till somebody asked him. I do not know whether that gentleman is still in a state of expectancy, or whether it is that during the last three years he has been rescued from his state of sin and misery; but I would remind him that next year is a leap year, and he will have the privilege, in common with the ladies, of wooing and winning if he can.

Mr. Chairman, there are only two kinds of women who will marry a blind man: the woman who will marry him must either be a fool or a heroine; for to face life with a blind man who has not an independence requires a woman the nearest approach to an angel to be found on this side of paradise.

Mr. Chairman, I had intended to say something more about the employment of the blind in the capacity of teachers, but have been led away. I am afraid I must seek another opportunity to-morrow on Mr. Stainsby's paper of finishing what I should like to say.

The Chairman: There are still so many speakers to deal with, that future speakers on this subject can only be allowed five minutes, and the bell will be rung at the expiration of four minutes. This rule will have to be kept absolutely, or I shall have to cut you down to three minutes.

Mr. W. H. Thurman (Birmingham): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I am bound to come into conflict with several of the speakers, because there have been so many opinions expressed on this important subject. Before going further, I should like to congratulate Mr. St. Clare Hill on his valuable paper.

My experience in the appointment of teachers, which deals with those of other schools as well as those of schools for the blind—tells me that the very best teachers should be obtained, who should have not only paper qualifications, but, what I consider to be very necessary, the qualification of sympathy with the blind. Now, without the sympathy, and without vivacity, failure is bound to result.

The teachers, in my opinion, should be non-resident as far as possible, for when a teacher is engaged getting the very best results out of the pupils from 9.30 to 12 o'clock, and from 2 to 4.30, he has had quite enough. Of course the resident teachers have certain other duties to perform besides those of teaching, and if they are to teach efficiently during the day they cannot perform the duties of supervision properly. And again, sighted children have day teachers, and why should not the blind? I think it is within the bounds of possibility that day teachers should be generally appointed and the duties of supervision relegated to attendants.

I have referred to sympathy with the blind. By this I do not mean mistaken kindness, but sympathy exhibited in a kind, firm yet practical way; and I am quite sure that this kind of teacher can be obtained by careful enquiry.

Special teachers in ordinary and secondary schools receive salaries commensurate with the work they have to do, and I fail to see why this should not be the case in regard to the special teachers for the blind.

Another class of teachers—those engaged in defective schools—get a much higher rate of salary than teachers of the blind, and I do not see why the latter should not be similarly treated.

What does strike me as a very admirable way in which to ascertain whether those who are qualifying as teachers of the blind are efficient, is by means of a private enquiry of Heads of Institutions. That is a matter, however, which I will, at the first opportunity, bring forward at a meeting of the representatives of the College of Teachers of the Blind.

Mr. Littlewood referred to teachers returning to ordinary schools after they had been engaged in a school for the blind for a certain period. I am afraid there would be very great difficulty in this direction. Instead of this I would suggest that special arrangements be made for the staff to visit the ordinary schools periodically, so as to become conversant with up-to-date methods.

I am sorry I have not time, through the closure being applied, to deal with other points, but must respectfully submit to the Chairman.

Mr. J. P. Kruger (South Africa): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I have just a few words to say. First, I would like to ask a question, and if some of the ladies or gentlemen are able to direct me in that respect I shall be glad. I would like to have a globe, and to know where I can get it, with all the constellations embossed upon

it. If that is to be had I shall be very pleased to be informed of it some time during the day.

I cannot say anything new on the subject under discussion, and I do not want to repeat what has been well said already. The only thing I feel is that in the school with which I am connected we make the teaching differ as little from that given to sighted children as is possible, and in cases where no concrete examples exist for showing things, the teachers must use their ingenuity in finding them out. You over here have inventors and discoverers, but we have none in South Africa.

As far as the teachers' certificates are concerned, we only employ teachers who are certificated and who have had some experience in sighted schools; and as far as the salaries are concerned our school is under the Board and controlled by Government. A Government School Inspector visits us every year, and the teachers are classified with the teachers in public schools. They have the same pensions, the same privileges, the same censors, as apply to ordinary day school teachers. At the same time, the Government gives to each teacher a service allowance—that is part of his pension when he retires. I should like also to have a little information if possible about Defective Schools for the Blind where you teach the defective blind children.

That is all I have to say, and I am very much interested in what I have heard.

I join in thanking Mr. St. Clare Hill for his valuable paper, and for the hints he has put forth, not only for teachers of the blind, but which will apply to teachers of the sighted as well. If a person does not himself possess character, he cannot teach children; if the teacher is not a noble-minded person, the child cannot possibly get on and shine in the world of education.

Miss Lily Bell (Norwood): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—A great deal has been said upon the employment of sighted teachers. I would like to say something about the employment of *competent* blind teachers. I use that word because it is a great mistake for an Institution to employ blind persons as teachers merely out of pity, when they are not qualified either naturally or by training to do the work. Most of our schools are large enough to employ more than one teacher, and I think whenever it is possible, blind teachers should be employed, but not to the exclusion of the sighted. The sighted and the blind teachers ought to work hand in hand. There are many subjects which the blind can teach as well as the sighted—I will not say better, for that would be

presumptuous—but as there are so few openings for blind people, I think they should be employed wherever possible. But when you are engaging blind teachers be sure that they are thoroughly capable, naturally and by training, and having secured them, have faith in them. If you have a child and tell that child to do something, saying "I do not suppose you will be able to do it, but you may try," he will probably not be successful unless he possesses a great deal of combativeness and determination; but if you make him feel that he will be able to succeed, in nine cases out of ten he will do so. So it is with blind teachers. If you select those who are thoroughly competent, and they only undertake to do what they are able to do—and I would say that I think there are many other branches they can teach besides "reading, writing, and arithmetic," such as mathematics, geography, etc.—when you have engaged them, let them feel that yon have every confidence in them.

In training our pupils for teachers at the Royal Normal College we try to make them realise that we believe they can do something, but we also try to make them realise that they must work hard to do it; because in order to accomplish the same results as the sighted, the blind must necessarily work harder. If they are going to take a class in arithmetic, for instance, they have to write out a number of the problems that an ordinary teacher would find in books; and in almost every branch of work it is the same. But the blind teachers must make up their minds to give additional time and labour, and must never be contented with anything inferior to the work of a sighted teacher.

We also make an effort to impress upon them the *responsibility* of every blind person. Every success means a success for others. Every failure means the closing of doors against many; and so they ought all to feel the responsibility of doing work, not only for themselves individually, but also for the benefit of their class.

There is just one point in connection with the remarks of Mr. Gribben (of Paisley). He said that all blind people were very poorly paid. Perhaps many are, but I would like to say that there are Institutions in the country that do pay their blind teachers well.

Mr. W. H. Dixson (Oxford): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I do not want to shout, but I hope anybody will call out who cannot hear me.

I should like to tell Mr. Gribben that I am still unappropriated.

I wish that someone would get up in the course of this discussion and say that we no more want the manners of rabid individualists than of rabid Socialists in our teachers. I do not think that bad manners are peculiar to any economic doctrine.

In the first place, I wonder why it is that in the course of this discussion we have heard nothing about the training and reasonable prospects of employment for home teachers. Because, after all, our work is not mainly connected with the young blind, but with the grown up and outdoor blind, who are in the majority, and I cannot understand why we do not take more interest in what is done by their teachers. Now, if Mr. Jerrett here is not too shy he will tell the Conference of the training he received at the hands of the teachers of the London Home Teaching Society. I do not know what he would have done but for that. He can tell us about that. But there is no doubt that many of the Societies do tend to sweat their home teachers; they pay them far too little, and, after all, as someone has said, if you want a good thing you must pay for it We may get a thing on the cheap, but it is not necessarily a cheap thing.

And now with regard to the qualifications of a teacher. There has been one question raised this morning and two sides taken; yet it is a question to which there cannot be two sides—that is to say, they may both be true at the same time. In other words, no teacher will ever be good enough unless he has the essential capacities of a teacher within him. And the better that man is, the more of a born teacher he is, so much the more will he benefit by training, and therefore the more necessary it is that he should have the best of training. So that the idea of setting up the trained teacher against the born teacher, and trying to prove that one is better than the other, seems to me quite unreasonable. In my opinion, too, it is only by training that you can tell whether a man is a born teacher or not. And so I hope that when we come to consider the question—and, after all, it is a question for teachers themselves to discuss—I hope they will not be afraid to take the matter into their own hands, to have a little conference among themselves and tell us what they want, and not simply be content to listen to what the heads of blind schools have got to tell them—excellent gentlemen as they are.

Miss Meiklejon (St. Leonards-on-Sea): Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,—I hope I may be pardoned if I am a little beside the point; but I have been asked by many to bring before your notice the existence of our little School in St. Leonards for Mentally Defective Blind Children. We have a Home to relieve you of the child who is a clog in an ordinary school for the blind; he is altogether behind the normal blind child, and cannot benefit by being trained with normal blind children. I may say our School is certified under the Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act, and also under the (Elementary Education) Blind and Deaf Children Act, so that Education Committees are empowered to send children to our School; and, in addition, Poor Law Guardians and other Societies interested in the blind may send children there.

In the second place, we believe that this training of blind defectives is going to be a great work in the future, and we have every reason to believe that it will provide suitable employment for blind teachers. The work is very difficult, but most interesting, and we see no reason at all why blind teachers should not be engaged in it.

In regard to the remarks of the delegate from Pittsburg, I may say that in England the blind defective is not admitted into the homes for the ordinary feeble-minded children; in the first place the Board of Education will not allow this. We ourselves have two schools—we have one for blind and one for seeing defectives. We did at the beginning try to bring them together, but were not successful. Under certain conditions it is good to do so, and on certain occasions we do find that to bring the schools together is a relief to us, and is of mutual benefit to the two classes of children.

I may say that the results of our work have been most encouraging so far, and the authorities have always given us their support. It was Sir Francis Campbell who suggested that this special school should be founded, and I hope he will recognise it as his godchild.

Mr. B. P. Jones (London): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen —I have attended the majority of the Conferences on the Blind that have been held in this country, but I think that this is the first time we have had a paper dealing specially with the teacher; and of course, in dealing with the teacher we deal with the worker, and when we deal with the worker it is often a question of pay, and when the question of pay comes it is often a stormy one.

Now I can assure the Rev. St. Clare Hill that all the teachers throughout the country—and I join with them—are very thankful to

him for breaking the ice in this matter with regard to the work of the blind. I am very sorry that it has been left so long. I think that if we wish the adult blind to do well we must start them well. We have learnt from this Conference that things are not what they ought to be. We all know this, but Mr. St. Clare Hill is the only one who has made it public.

Now, with regard to training. My opinion is this: get a teacher who has been trained in the ordinary training college, and with some experience of teaching the ordinary child; then follow that up (as Mr. St. Clare Hill said) with a special training for about twelve months with the blind. Of course it is by experience that we learn, and dealing, as I do, with the deaf and the blind in the London County Council Schools, I am able to tell you that the deaf teachers have practically solved these questions of training and pay for themselves, and I hope that in the not very far distant future the blind teachers will do the same. In the case of the deaf, the London County Council offer scholarships to any students who have been through an ordinary training college, to go for a year to the Fitzroy Square College, or to Ealing College for Training Teachers of the Deaf. If any teacher or student from an ordinary training college wishes to take up the teaching of the blind, I should be very glad to recommend such a student for a scholarship to go to the Royal Normal College for the Blind. There is no question as to the danger of getting teachers into the work who know nothing at all about the blind; the child suffers, and there has been a great deal too much of that both in the blind and the deaf schools of the country. So much for training.

Now then, the question of payment. In London we make no distinction; we give teachers who come to our schools, after they have had the ordinary training, the scale salary; also in addition we give them £10 more until they reach the maximum.

In regard to blind teachers, we make no distinction whatever. They get exactly the same money as the sighted teachers; furthermore, we also pay their guides.

(The time limit having been reached, the Chairman gave special permission to the speaker to continue.)

As I said, we pay the blind teachers exactly the same as those who are sighted, and in the residential schools, if we require a teacher to reside in the school and do a certain amount of extra duty, we pay exactly the same as though non-residential.

Now with regard to pensions. Every certificated teacher is of course covered by the scheme which Mr. Ritchie mentioned. But

there is also a scheme with regard to those who are not Government-certificated; they come under the officers' scheme, which is a very good one.

I would like to make a suggestion with regard to Mr. Hill's remarks on pensions. There is a large number of teachers of the blind throughout the country who are not certificated, and who have no hope of any pension. A similar difficulty exists in the schools for the deaf, and there is a movement now in connection with the deaf teachers to bring uncertificated teachers before the notice of the Board of Education, and I think it would be a good plan if we could get the teachers of the blind to join them. The application would be all the stronger, and I have no doubt that a pension would be obtained.

With regard to the question of salaries in other schools, I am sorry to say that often the pay is very poor. I have heard of teachers possessing full qualifications, who are not paid as well as some cooks are. That is not right. I think it is for the Authorities, the Committees, and the Head Masters of all Institutions to deal with this question. I do not think, for the sake of the work, that a blind teacher should be paid less than a sighted one.

Miss Cox (Bradford): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I should like to emphasise the power of teachers in the blind work—both the sighted and the blind. It seems to me that they are almost afraid to aim sufficiently high with the children under their control. In my school, which is a mixed one in every sense of the word—boys and girls, poor and rich, deficient, normal and abnormal, and sighted and blind teachers—I come in contact with many difficulties; but I do think that all are afraid to aim too high. For instance, we had a rocking horse in school long before I was connected with it. When I came I found it boarded round to protect the children; last year I asked the Committee to have the horse renovated, which they did, and when it came back to us I thought we would do away with those protections, and try to teach the children to play on it like ordinary children do. I thought to myself, "They can do other things much more difficult, and I must teach them to do this." The next morning, when I came to the school, all the teachers lined up, and said, "Oh, Miss Cox, it can't be done; you will have accidents." I said we would try it, but not without supervision. I am glad to say that now all the children in the school, even the deficient ones and the tiniest of the tiny, can now play on the horse; stand up on the back or sides or almost anywhere; turn round, or do anything they want. Every child can do this, and I do

maintain that if we aim at the top of the tree, if we do not get there, we shall fall somewhere among the branches.

I may say that under the Bradford Education Committee every teacher who is qualified, who undertakes the work of teaching the blind, if too great a strain upon their nerves, they can after seven years take a position in any other school in the City.

I may say that we have at Bradford one of the best blind teachers that there is in the country. She is paid £10 more yearly than any sighted assistant I have, so that you see her capabilities and her good work are duly recognised.

Rev. St. Clare Hill: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—It has been suggested by Mr. Stone that this subject was not a fit one to be introduced for the discussion of this Conference. I am sure he must now be convinced that he made a mistake. There has been a great deal of diversity of opinion expressed, showing that the members are deeply interested. Also, it does seem to me that, speaking generally, it would be quite a mistake for a line of action or a set of principles to be decided upon by a few people in a corner. We want, do we not, by persuasion, and by putting our cause before the general public, to create a public opinion by which we may get eventually to that which we deem to be best.

I was very much surprised to hear Mr. Stone make a statement to the effect that I am not a teacher. I look upon myself as a teacher in a threefold capacity: I teach the blind, am an Examiner for the College of Teachers for the Blind, and in another capacity it is my business to inspect various schools for the Government—so that in three senses of the word I am a teacher, and I have been giving my attention to the duties of a teacher for the last nineteen years. I am not going to let Mr. Stone take away that of which I am proud. Also it has been my business to go to Henshaw's Blind Asylum in Manchester, and I know from what I have gathered there that Mr. Illingworth is a teacher. So Mr. Stone has to correct himself in a third particular this morning.

I should just like to say a word about Mr. Littlewood's remarks. He says, "First let the teachers be trained, and then let them specialise." I should be delighted, but we must take the world as it is now, and try to raise it up to what we want. We must take the teachers as we have them now, and little by little come up to that higher standard. He suggested too that the teachers might oscillate between blind and sighted schools; say, work for two years in a blind

school, and then go back to a sighted school. It seems to me that when a man or woman has put his or her hand to some special labour, it is better to carry this through thoroughly well.

The situation is adequately met by Mr. Thurman, who said, "Let the teacher who is engaged in blind schools visit sighted schools and see what is being done." Surely that is the better policy. We do not want our teachers to be behind the times, but it would not do to get them to take only a casual interest for a few years in the work of the blind, and then go to another class of work.

I should have liked to say something in regard to the excellent remarks of Lady Campbell, and I am sure they commend themselves to the whole room.

With regard to some of Mr. Ritchie's remarks, he seemed to think that I had in my mind a great gap fixed. He quoted Scripture to impress me that there was in my mind a great gap between the teachers of the sighted and those of the blind. No such thing; but at the present moment, much as I am interested in sighted schools, I am entirely wrapped up in the question of teaching the blind, and am going to leave the question of sighted schools in order to concentrate my mind on that question.

Another speaker referred to a point upon which I should like to reflect. She said, "Draw the teachers from sighted schools by offering them good salaries." But what is going to happen to the number of blind teachers who want to be teachers in blind schools? Let us remember that we can get a good number of sighted teachers from the sighted world, but there must be a place provided for the blind teachers to work.

I cannot for the life of me see what the question of marriage has to do with the subject before us. There may be some subtle explanation, but really I cannot see why it was introduced, and I think it suitably replied to by Mr. Dixson.

THE CHAIRMAN: The session will now adjourn till two o'clock.

MR. WILSON: Before separating I should like to propose a very hearty vote of thanks to our Chairman for presiding this morning—not only for his excellent conduct in the chair, but for his impressive opening address, which showed his sympathy with the blind.

I am sure that all here are delighted to see the Mayor to-day, and we ought to thank him for his hospitality last night, but a formal resolution to that effect will be moved at our last session.

On your behalf, I propose a very cordial vote of thanks to our Chairman to-day.

(The resolution was seconded, and on being put to the meeting was carried unanimously.)

THE CHAIRMAN: I can assure you it is quite superfluous to thank me. I have thoroughly enjoyed the meeting. You have not given me any trouble, and I have learnt a great deal. Let me remind you once more of the 2 o'clock session this afternoon.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON.

CHAIRMAN : Mr. Councillor C. J. Ross.

MR. COLLINGWOOD, (Secretary of Conference) : Ladies and Gentlemen,—I much regret that duties of State prevent the attendance of the Peer, who was in the first instance, asked to preside over this morning's meeting and deliberations.

Under the circumstances, Mr. Councillor Ross, one of Exeter's most energetic citizens and a musical enthusiast, has kindly consented, at comparatively short notice, to occupy the Chair, and I have little doubt but that he will carry out such duties as efficiently as the gentleman originally selected to do so.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen,—After the remarks made by Mr. Collingwood you will, I am sure, acquit me of impersonating the Noble Lord who should have taken this chair. I was told there was absolutely nothing for the Chairman to do, but knowing something about music, I thought that the case might be somewhat different. Doubtless many of you know the story of the clown who said "What, do you call this musical harmony? Then give me a mutton chop." (Laughter). The fact is musical people are so highly strung that there are very often differences of opinion, which the very fact of their being musical engenders and brings forth. I fear too that I shall not be able to contribute very much to the divine art under discussion this afternoon, excepting that I have been asked to take the chair.

Mr. Collingwood says I am an enthusiast in music. I am passionately fond of it, and I may say I derive my musical gift from a blind great-grandfather, who was rather a celebrated man at the beginning of the last century. He came from Martock, in Somerset, and was a well known musicihn and organist. I believe his wife used to read the notes out to him, and he had that marvellous gift of memory which the blind so frequently possess, and was able to recollect all that was read to him. There are many tales about him, but I will not trouble you with them. I saw him when he was over ninety, and it has often been said that when a remark has been made to him about sympathy, he would at once say, "Why, sir, what do you mean, sir? Don't sympathise with me, sir! One pair of ears is worth fifty pairs of eyes." An

really he was so remarkable and so marvellous that he did not seem to want any sympathy. I have been told that when he was seven years of age the nurse took him to an old gipsy about his eyes, which were troubling him. She did something to him with an iron, and completely ruined his sight.

It struck me that those personal reminiscences might be of interest to you at this period, when everything is so advanced, because (as a speaker said yesterday) it is more than sympathy that is required—it is mechanical assistance in order to develop those great powers which are intensified by the calamity of blindness, and so to enable the gifts, and the product of those gifts, to be handed down to future generations. The power of mental calculation is a great gift.

It has just occurred to me that the finest boats which Nat Hereschoff has designed—which, as you know, have beaten our own boats in America—were designed by him after he was blind. That is very remarkable.

I will not detain you longer, except to ask Mr. Warrilow to kindly read his paper.

Mr. Warrilow: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—Before starting to read my paper, I should like to make two remarks. The first is that on account of its length it has been necessary to cut out certain important matters, but I hope that fact will not influence those matters being discussed.

I have left out the following: The parts on Examinations; hearing good music; concerts; teaching tuning; a portion of the remarks on Braille music; and methods of learning. I have omitted these, not because they are of less importance, but I wish particularly to emphasise the organist's point of view. I am a Church organist, and have taken up this paper rather with the idea of representing the organist than from the teacher's point of view. As I left the Royal Normal College many years ago, I am better qualified to speak for the organist than for the teacher.

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to thank Mr. Collingwood for all he has done for the blind organists who have come to Exeter for yesterday's services. He has certainly had very hard work. Of course I know we had in some cases very short notices, but that could not be helped. In one case a Te Deum was got up, and also a new anthem, in the course of one week.

I should like also to thank the clergy and organists of Exeter who have come forward in a most exceptional manner to help us by putting their pulpits and their organs at our disposal.

A RETROSPECT OF THE MORE RECENT MUSICAL EDUCATION OF THE BLIND, AND SUGGESTIONS AS TO THE FUTURE.

By H. C. Warrilow, F.R.C.O.,

Organist of St. Barnabas Church, Oxford.

When asked by the Conference Committee to read a paper on this subject, I gladly undertook to do so, for I hoped thereby, however imperfectly, to do something to represent the needs of the Organist and Music Teacher. This being my special object, I have not, and I fully realise the fact, dealt at all adequately with either the Institutional or the International aspects. In preparation for this paper, I sent out letters and question sheets, to the number of about eighty, to Heads of Institutions, to Organists and Music Teachers, and to Braille Publishing Houses, and I have received over forty replies. The questions to the first and second of these have been printed on a separate sheet. Before going further I should like to thank all those who have kindly contributed replies; for, on account of the number received, it has not been possible to make individual acknowledgment. I should like to record my special indebtedness to Sir Francis Campbell, Mr. Stainsby, Mr. Stone. Mr. Allen, of the Perkins Institution, Boston, and to Mr. Platt, all of whom have supplied valuable information.

I have touched upon some points raised in Mr. Platt's most useful Manchester Conference paper, firstly, because

they will well bear further emphasis, and, secondly, because they are looked at from a somewhat different point of view. Since that paper was read, and in some cases as the outcome of it, much has been done in the direction of supplying the needs of the blind musician. Mr. Stainsby's arrival at the B.F.B.A. has, by general consent, made a great difference to the prospects of the blind. He has already done much to supply general needs, and his readiness to do more in the direction of music has very considerably improved the outlook for the blind musician.

In the summer of 1909 Sir Francis Campbell invited a number of blind musicians to meet at his house to discuss their musical needs. Mr. Stainsby was also present, and the minutes were subsequently printed by the B.F.B.A. Apart from making a few suggestions as to the printing of church music (suggestions which have been carried out in the service music lately printed at the B.F.B.A.), very little was done, or could be done, to deal with the question which has been so much to the fore of late—the Revision of Braille Music—but the meeting was of special value in that it gave voice to certain urgent needs, for more music (especially organ music), textbooks, and musical literature. It also was the means, at the suggestion of Mr. Platt, and backed by Mr. Stainsby, of bringing into existence the "Braille Musical Magazine." This Magazine has now been running for 18 months, and it is very evident from the large number of expressions of appreciation that such a magazine was really wanted.

The editor and sub-editors are very grateful for all this warm appreciation of their work. Another outcome, though an indirect one, was the starting of a fund to assist the production of more music and musical literature in Braille. Sir Francis Campbell entered very heartily into this scheme, and he and a number of well-known blind and seeing musicians have kindly consented to form

a committee. At present Oxford has been the chief contributor, but it is to be hoped, as the fund becomes more widely known, that offers of help will be forthcoming from other parts of the country. At present the sum raised is just over £34. I have brought a good supply of fund circulars with me, and shall be very glad to give them to any who are interested in the project. I have also to record the formation of two other committees, one, consisting of blind and seeing musicians, to advise the B.F.B.A. what music it will be best to stereotype; and the other to help Miss Austin to make the music department of the National Lending Library as useful as possible.

Examinations.

It is very satisfactory to note the increased interest taken by institutions in standard examinations, Many prospective organists, pianists, and singers naturally wish to get some degree which will give them a more definite status in their profession, but until within a few years such examinations as those of the R.C.O., etc., were not prepared for to any extent in institutions. It is a very great step forward to get these out of the way before practical life is entered upon, for when an appointment has been obtained, it is generally best to be free to throw one's whole energy into the new work. It is, moreover, difficult (I found it decidedly so) to get the necessary help to enable one to pass such examinations, and the result is that much more time and energy are expended than would be the case in an institution. In some instances examinations provide a useful incentive to work after school days; but as a rule, especially where there is some talent for composition, it is very much better for the development of true musicianship to devote time to this, rather than to the working out of multitudes of Harmony and Counter-

point exercises. So few students arrive at Free Counterpoint, and it would appear that the writing of a hymn tune is still the most conspicuous goal of the study of harmony. In the "Braille Musical Magazine" competitions, the few entries for Folk-Song Accompaniments and the Coronation March is not without its significance.

In spite of this modern tendency to overdo examinations, I consider examinations, in that they provide a definite object to work for, a real help to musical development in schools, not only to the young, but also to senior pupils, who are likely to be assisted in after life by obtaining a good musical degree. It often happens that a man without a degree is quite as good or perhaps a better musician than one with a degree, and very likely he is just as successful; but this does not prove the uselessness of degrees, and I'm sure there are many old pupils of the Royal Normal College, including myself, who would have found it a great help to have taken their R.C.O. diplomas before leaving the College. Such examinations now receive full attention, as the following particulars will show—Within the last 3 years, 8 have passed the Associate, and 5 the Fellowship of the R.C.O., 5 the L.R.A.M., and 1 the Durham MUS. B. In addition to these, the total of the College successes in these higher examinations is well worth recording: A.R.C.O. 29, F.R.C.O. 15, L.R.A.M. 14, MUS. B. 3.

The success percentage in institutions, large and small, is extraordinarily high. I can only give a few of the figures that have come to hand— I.S.M. for the last 3 years, Edinburgh, 42 entered, 41 passed; Royal Victoria School, Newcastle, 34 entered, 31 passed; Exeter, 22 entered, all passed, 13 with honours, while out of a total of 69 for 9 years there have been no failures. Glasgow, Trinity College, London, 8 passed, no failures at any time. Pupils very frequently obtain highest marks in Glasgow, and on two occasions have come out 1st and 2nd for Great Britain.

In cases where there is only a blind music teacher at an Institution, the plan adopted by Mr. Collingwood, of having a seeing musician examine the pupils once a term, is quite excellent.

Those who wish to develop their capacity for composition independently of examinations are likely to find Mr. Frederick Corder's recently published book, "Modern Musical Composition," most helpful and suggestive.

The Hearing of Good Music.

As far as I can judge from the institution letters received, a greater effort is being made to enable pupils to hear good music. The more the importance of this can be recognised, the better, for the hearing of good music is undoubtedly a great factor in musical development. It often happens that a musician is stowed away in some small town or village where there are few chances of hearing good concerts or recitals, and in such cases it is certainly an advantage to have heard plenty of good music during school days. The larger institutions, and apparently most of the smaller ones, fully recognise the importance of attending concerts, and many have tickets sent them for the pupils. In schools where there is only a blind music teacher, the pianola might be made more use of for recital purposes, to acquaint the pupils with more music, old and new; and Mr. Hollins is of opinion that every school should have one. He writes—"All the best institutions ought to have one for use by their best pupils. If several blind schools had pianolas, they could combine, and then it would come much cheaper to get any rolls cut which would be wanted by all, such as organ music, etc." Mr. Platt, who has successfully experimented at Edgbaston with the pianola, will doubtless give us further information on this question.

Concerts.

Not only is it important for students to hear good music, but when they have reached a certain degree of proficiency, they should have as many chances as possible of playing to people, firstly in socials and concerts in the school, and then in outside concerts.

All the letters I have received from institutions record concerts in the institution, and most of them outside also, but it would seem that more might be done to get senior pupils engagements to play and sing at concerts, an experience which would be valuable to them, not only musically, but also because it would bring them into contact with seeing people. I fully realise that this might very easily be overdone, to the detriment of the regular work of the pupil, but anything that helps to bring the blind and seeing into more intimate relations is of real value.

In this connection, I may mention that a tendency has been prevalent for many years to bring the very talented pupils to the fore often to the exclusion of their less talented, though quite capable fellow pupils. This method may have been justified in the past in order to break down the prejudice against the blind, but as the chief aim of an institution should be not the production of remarkable solo performers, but the turning out of average livelihood-earning citizens, I should like to see the average man receiving more attention than he has done in the past. The world will not do quite so much wondering, but the blind and society would be the better off. The wonderment of the public, however, does not matter, provided the blind do not look upon themselves as wonders.

From organists' letters, it is very evident that concert giving is considered well worth while, quite 75 per cent. having given recitals or concerts, or played at such. In

most cases these have been a financial success as well as a musical, only a small number recording financial loss. The general opinion is that concerts do not tend to increase the teaching connection, but there are three who record an increase in this direction, and one an increase in tuning. Several of these concerts have been given in connection with the organist's church or for charitable purposes, but quite a good proportion have been for the benefit of the givers, one correspondent having given as many as 18 during the winter. Outside the large centres is evidently the best field; but my experience is, if the concerts are to pay, much attention must be given to the organising of ticket sale.

Teaching and Tuning.

If tuners who teach, but have no regular appointment, were counted in comparing the profits from tuning and from teaching, there is little doubt but that tuning would be found the more remunerative, but judging from the letters I have received from organists, the majority derive more from teaching than from tuning. 22 out of 39 either do not tune, or have given it up, while out of the remainder only 5 derive more from tuning than from teaching. It is very evident that tuning is decidedly useful, but for the organist its usefulness seems to have been rather overestimated. There can be little doubt, however, that many organists have found tuning useful at the outset, though they may, and often do, give it up as soon as they can do without it. Generally speaking, where the organist's position does not enable him to command a good fee for lessons, tuning and teaching go together; but when he can command a good fee or gets enough teaching to do without tuning, he often gives up the latter, or reduces it to a minimum. In the majority of such cases I think it will be given up quite voluntarily, without social pressure (though several letters show that this factor cannot be ignored),

and not infrequently, pressure of musical work makes it necessary to give up tuning. I would say that it is generally advantageous for the average musician to learn tuning, for it is likely to be found useful, if only for a time, but it should not be forced upon the exceptionally talented. Personally, I am glad to have learnt it, for I found it helpful for some years.

Ear Training.

I have received only one negative reply to my question on this subject. In nearly all the chief institutions in this country, and I would add to these the Perkins' Institution, Boston, ear training receives careful attention, dictations being given in melodies and chords; while in the smaller institutions the subject is not neglected. However, one or two of the larger institutions are lagging behind, not having got so far as dictations. I am glad to note, under the able guidance of Mr. Stewart Macpherson, that much more is done in ear training at the Royal Normal College than in my day, for not only in the harmony classes, but also in the children's singing classes, the subject receives attention. The firstrate programme recently carried out at Steinway Hall (and given in the May number of the Braille Musical Magazine) bears very conclusive testimony to the excellence of Mr. Macpherson's work. I should also like to mention that the admirable work done at Edgbaston (I heard the results quite recently) in the Tonic Sol Fa, must be very helpful in developing the musical ear. This method gives special attention to rhythm, a factor in musical development, the importance of which is only just beginning to be recognised.

Institution Services.

It is very easy to point out defects in institution services viewed from their practical utility in training organists. In Scotland, where most of the organists seek posts in

Scotch churches, institutions by concentrating upon anthems and the simple requirements of a Presbyterian service, can give the organist what will be most useful to him for church work; but in England, where institution services are often undenominational, needs cannot be so adequately met The only completely satisfactory reply I have received is the following from Leatherhead, where the Institution service is Church of England, which shows very clearly that organists at this Institution are very well equipped for accompanying all branches of the Church Service:

"Full Cathedral Service with anthems at morning and evening service each Sunday, and the Missa Cantata on the first Sunday in each month. During the School year we sing at least 70 anthems."

I fully realise that many other institutions are not in a position to follow this example, but if the training is to be adequate for those who afterwards seek church appointments, and there are sure to be many, some further effort is necessary in most institutions to turn out good service accompanists as well as solo performers. Chanting receives good attention, and it is a very great thing that an organist should know his psalter thoroughly; Canticle settings and anthems receive some attention; but Plainsong and Choral Communion are either quite neglected, or receive the minimum of attention. The stereotyping of a good book on Plainsong would probably go far to meet current needs in this department, for Plainsong could hardly be a regular subject in many schools; but I would strongly recommend that it be made possible for every prospective church organist to accompany a Choral Communion before leaving his institution, for it would appear that Choral Communions are becoming much more general, and many churches which do not have one every Sunday, have one occasionally.

In Oxford there are as many as 9 churches where there

is a Choral Celebration every Sunday. In cases where conditions do not admit of a Choral Communion at the institution, there seems no reason why the music to the Sanctus, Benedictus Qui Venit, or Gloria in Excelsis, should not be sung as an anthem occasionally. In concluding this section I should like to add, that for the organist, accompanying is quite as important, if not more important than solo performance, and as the average organist gets much more from his church work than from recital giving, it is very desirable that service music should receive its due share of attention, It is more than likely that the solo side will be more attractive to the student, and he cannot err in having too large a voluntary repertoire, but from recitals as such he is not likely to derive much of his income.

Improvisation.

Here are two answers to my question: "Do you encourage improvisation?" Rev. St. Clare Hill, writes—"Yes, at each organ lesson short themes are given for improvisation, also introductions to anthems, accompaniments to creeds, etc."

Mr. Stone writes—"I encourage pupils to improvise, and occasionally give a place on programmes to improvisations; at the same time they are warned against overdoing improvising." Mr. Stone goes on to say, that their music master, Mr. Lee Ashton, periodically criticises pupils' extempories, and illustrates how themes should be worked out.

Obviously in small institutions, where there are only quite young pupils, it would be unwise to encourage improvising, though even in these something might be done to encourage the improvising of melodies; but with the exception of the two replies quoted above, almost all the other Institution letters give the impression that it is expedient to keep this subject well in the background. Of course,

unless care were exercised in this direction, some pupils would waste much valuable time, and it is equally clear that Hollins and Wolstenholme improvising cannot be taught; but the question I ask myself is, how is it that so many quite capable performers make such a poor show at extemporising? In many cases it is not incapacity, for many of these performers can produce interesting compositions, and it therefore follows that the training must be to some extent responsible. It ought to be at least possible to teach an average man not to feel painfully uncomfortable when asked to extend a hymn for two or three minutes. The greater cultivation of a sense of rhythm, which neither learning from Braille music, nor the work of a Church musician, does much to foster, would be a definite contributor to the production of better improvisations.

Deputising.

The principal Institutions, almost without exception, answer this question in the affirmative, but I feel a little doubtful as to how many would be able to repeat Mr. Stone's words:

"Before leaving, all our organists have a chance of deputising, and many take deputy posts in the school vacation."

It is, of course, much easier for a Scotch organist to do this; but if the value of deputising were more fully realised, no doubt more would be done in England to overcome the greater obstacles that present themselves. What is wanted is some organisation which would arrange for organists to deputise, either during school days or during the time of waiting to get an appointment; for a man's chances of getting an appointment would be thereby increased, as it would give him the kind of experience most likely to be of value to him. Some such organisation is necessary, for even if deputising could be secured at Churches in the

vicinity of the Institution, it would often only be of service to those whose homes were within reasonable distance of the Institution, as most organists want a deputy in the long vacations.

Where it is possible, it is undoubtedly a great advantage for a prospective church organist to be articled to some seeing organist, if only for a limited time.

Conducting a Choir.

In this direction, more perhaps than in any other part of the organist's work, there is much that can be learnt only by practical experience. Accompanying Psalms, Canticles, Anthems, etc., singing in the Institution Choir, and hearing that Choir ably conducted, are all real helps to an organist; but those who consider these alone sufficient to produce good choirmasters, overlook three very important factors— (1) the cultivation of responsibility; (2) contact with the seeing; (3) the choir boy.

Life in Institutions for the Blind, especially in large institutions, however splendidly helpful it may be in many ways, does little, as far as I have been able to observe, to encourage individual responsibility. The pupils live too exclusively in a world of the blind to make it possible for them to be natural with the seeing (their relations with seeing teachers are necessarily on a different footing), and consequently, when they come to conduct even a mixed choir, which is an easier matter than conducting a surpliced choir, they are at a disadvantage, through lack of authority and contact with the seeing, which they ought not to be. They are at a further disadvantage in dealing with choir boys, who want understanding and a firm hand; and though I am producing evidence immediately to show that these difficulties have been successfully met, much might undoubtedly be done in the previous training to make it easier to deal with such problems.

One institution's reply reads— "One practice a week of the school choir is conducted by one of the organists." In many institutions this excellent plan cannot always be followed, but it is a help for senior pupils to take singing classes, and it would be a still further advantage for them, two or three at a time, to attend Church or Chapel choir practices in the neighbourhood of the institution, so that they can see how choir boys are trained. This would get them familiar with service music, and show them what average choirs are like. At present many pupils would appear to disadvantage at the outset if asked to train an ordinary village choir. This would be due not merely to inexperience, but it arises chiefly from lack of initiative and lack of knowledge as to how to get the best out of sometimes very indifferent material. Accompanying, or singing in, or even conducting a good choir in an Institution, is one thing; accompanying and conducting an average parish choir is quite another.

Of the organists who have answered my questions, several have mixed choirs, and these appear to have no difficulty in training them. Of the others, as many as 18 are their own choirmasters, and have choir boys to look after. Almost without exception these prefer to have a seeing person present, either to keep order or to report disorder. Before giving extracts from the replies, some comments are necessary: (1) That personality plays a much more conspicuous part in choir-training than in organ playing, and if an organist has a good supply of this article, and a liking for boys, he will succeed whether he is seeing or blind; (2) some organists, blind and seeing, have not the capacity for keeping boys in order, and want someone to look after this while they do the musical part, but it is wholly unfair that such an organist (if blind) should be judged by the clergy to represent blind organists as a class.

Extracts: "No serious difficulty not common to a seeing man; monitor for discipline." "I have always a man with me at all my practices, who keeps his eye on the boys and reports any misconduct, lack of attention, etc., to me, at the time or afterwards according to circumstances. This plan answers admirably, as the boys soon find out that it does not pay to misbehave, and that retribution follows swiftly on any offence. I do not allow the monitor to correct or punish the boys. I am sorry to say that experience has taught me that it is hopeless to trust to the honour of boys; the spirit of mischief always proves too much for it." "No difficulty, kind but firm with boys. I like them, and can often trust to sense of honour." "Boys round me in schoolroom; generally alone, tight rein, little difficulty; desirable that priest should occasionally attend practice." "Vicar or schoolmaster always present. Personality chief factor." "Have not experienced much difficulty in managing boys, though have only had them about five of the years I have been organist. My experience has been rather happy in that direction, as I like boys and get on with them very well. When possible, I train a pupil as my eyes." "Only essential for keeping order, seeing person to attend practices, it being clearly understood that you yourself are in command." "Worked for two years with choirmaster, but have for the last year taken over the choir training." "My sighted friend hardly ever has to report misbehaviour on the part of the boys. The other day my rector congratulated me on the way the choir has progressed since I have been training them. I say this in no spirit of conceit, but only as a proof that the fear generally expressed at entrusting the training of a choir to a blind man is a mere bogey. It is not everyone who can manage boys, but this remark applies as much to the sighted as to the blind."

One of my correspondents, who is of opinion that a

musician should not be expected to keep boys in order as well as teach them, says that he knows of one very efficient seeing teacher who always has two Christian brothers to look after the boys; and he also remarks that at a certain Cathedral it takes the organist, the curate, and a layman all their time to keep order; from which it is evident that the seeing as well as the blind have difficulties in this direction.

It is much to be hoped that this Conference will do something to remove the prejudice still entertained by many clergy and ministers against appointing blind organists. As Mr. Hardebeck says—and his judgment can be relied upon, for he is a very good musician, and has carried off several prizes at the Dublin Feis Ceol—"Blind musicians are without doubt in every way superior musicians to the average seeing musician"; and there can be no doubt that many posts which have been given to seeing organists on account of the prejudice against blind applicants, might have been more ably filled by the latter. Curiously enough, one of my correspondents, whose wife assists him to keep the boys in order, finds his vicar, who is a poor disciplinarian, a hindrance instead of a help at the practices. I am very glad to say that I am not similarly situated, for my vicar, the Rev. Cyril Hallett (soon to become Archdeacon to the Bishop of Zanzibar), is one of the best disciplinarians I have ever known. We work most harmoniously together, and the services at St. Barnabas Oxford, are known far and wide for the exceptionally, reverent way in which they are conducted.

I have the addresses of quite 65 blind organists (and there must be many more) now holding organ appointments, and as the musical equipment is certainly better than it used to be, it is to be hoped that this number will be very largely increased before the next Conference.

Supply of Braille Music.

The prospect in this direction has brightened considerably since 1908, but I can only touch on a few signs of progress. In addition to the music which has appeared in "Craigmillar Harp" and the "Braille Musical Magazine," Elementary Piano has been represented by some Gurlitt and Loeschhorn (B.F.B.A.), and "First Lessons in Bach" (Edinburgh); Examinations by I.S.M. Examination Questions Book; Service Music by Harvest and Christmas Anthems, and Stanford's Service in B flat (B.F.B.A.); Organ Music by Harwood's Sonata and Pearce's Studies (Edinburgh); and pieces by Hopkins, Smart, and Stanford are now in hand at the B.F.B.A. "Collects, Epistles, and Gospels" should be useful to organists and clergy alike. All this is promising.

The idea until recently prevailing in Braille publishing houses—that there is little or no demand for stereotyped music—is unfounded, for the fact is that so little could be expected from publishing houses in the past, that the blind musician has been bound to depend almost entirely on MS. Braille music. Most musicians will have to do some copying, many a great deal, and seeing help will often have to be called in; but in view of the fact that there is a much greater reliance on Braille music than there used to be, standard works and music which is very generally used (whether standard or not) ought to be stereotyped. The organist has been quite exceptionally neglected, not only in the service line, but also in organ music, which is wanted by all organists wherever they play. For instance, for over 20 years from 1886, the B.F.B.A. produced only 5s. worth of organ music. Happily there is every sign that such neglect is a thing of the past. If the organist could get as much stereotyped organ music as would fill half the volumes occupied by one of Scott's novels, he would consider himself

exceptionally well looked after. As an illustration of the lack of service music, only one of the 22 Communion Services I have at my church is printed, to say nothing of Canticle settings, and I know others who have been very similarly situated.

Though such difficulties have been successfully coped with, needs like these should have been anticipated. I may say here that Institutions are often very willing to lend a helping hand on such emergencies, but distance from the Institution will often prevent the acceptance of this help. Before taking up my present Church work, I was glad to accept the very valuable assistance offered to me by Sir Francis Campbell.

My letters show that the chief demand is for Elementary Piano Music for teaching, elementary, and medium grades; Organ and Service Music; and to a less extent, for Songs and Advanced Piano Music. There is also a considerable demand for Sacred Cantatas, Text Books, Musical Literature, etc. I will refrain from analysing the etc., for it would take too much space.

The following suggestions may be of use to printers:—

1. That music which is likely to be most useful to blind musicians, whether it is standard or not, should receive the first attention. This is especially applicable to service music, for the anthems printed some years ago by the B.F.B.A., though they are quite standard and likely to be of service to a Cathedral organist, are most of them of no use to the average parish organist.

2. That old and new music should both receive attention, for those who have M.S. copies of the former will be glad to purchase the latter.

3. That standard works should receive the next attention, per. ex. a complete edition of Beethoven's Sonatas, Schumann's and Schubert's Songs, etc.

4. That there should be a depot in this country for all good Braille music published on the continent, and to this should be added, Braille music published in America; for Mr. Jewell. of Illinois, writes me that the postage would not be more than to an adjacent town, and many might be ready to learn a new alphabet which is only used in titles and expression marks. It is hoped that with music which, for various reasons, it would not be worth while to stereotype, that the music department of the Incorporated Lending Library will be able to do good work in supplying the demand in this direction.

In concluding this section, the kindness of publishers in so readily giving permission for their publications to be stereotyped deserves special mention. Messrs. Novello & Co. have always shown their exceptional readiness in this direction, and the chairman of this firm, Mr. A. H. Littleton, has kindly consented to become a member of the committee of the Embossed Music Fund referred to at the beginning of this paper.

As a contrast, to this readiness to assist the blind musician, the refusal of Messrs. Forberg, of Leipsic, to give the B.F.B.A. permission to stereotype Rheinberger's Sonatas is very much to be regretted.

Staff Notation.

The demand for a more complete book of Staff Notation Characters, though considerable, is not as great as I had expected, and this demand would probably be met by the embossing of the Staff Notation examples in the I.S.M. Questions Book. Should this prove difficult, the general need may be met by, as one of my correspondents suggests, printing, in ordinary type, a complete book of Staff Notation characters, and placing the Braille equivalents beside each sign.

I cannot judge from institution letters, on account of the wording of my question, as to the amount of attention given to staff notation, but I get the impression from these and from private letters, that most pupils do not really become intimate with this subject till after leaving school. Some particulars I have received from Mr. Allen, of the Perkins Institution, Boston, should prove of interest. He writes that the staff notation, which has been taught successfully for twelve years, is learnt before Braille music, and that there is a "Normal Department" in connection with the Institution, where ex-pupils have the opportunity of teaching seeing children, under the supervision of one of the staff, the children being taken (not carefully selected) from the ordinary schools. The adoption in this country of such an excellent method is well worthy of consideration, for it provides that class of work with which the pupil has subsequently to deal, and gives the prospective music teacher a practical method of working. Mr. Lucas, Music Master at Leatherhead (the only Institution recording a new method of teaching staff notation), has invented "a system by which the blind can, in Braille, describe sighted music exactly as it appears in a sighted copy." Space does not allow of any details here, but as Mr. Lucas is purposing to publish an account of his system, no doubt many will be glad to study it.

Methods of Learning.

There are three of these: from Braille, from having the music read from staff notation, from having it played over. One and two are most favoured, but nearly all my correspondents find playing over helpful, either for actual learning or for making the acquaintance of new music. Only one states that playing over would be of no use to him at all, and only one learns all his music from the staff, either played or read, according to circumstances. Everyone is to

some degree dependent on sighted help, in most cases to a considerable extent.

Here are some of the answers:—Played, read, played again. Played little by little, but some reading necessary for accuracy. Learn much from staff; prefer combination of reading and playing. Quickest from staff; played first for general conception, then play it myself for detail. Braille copy most handy for reference. Song accompaniments from staff, played little by little; prefer reading, but amateurs generally play better than they read; copy anthems by having them played two parts at a time. Braille church and choir music and songs; this is best for accuracy. Have everything dictated and learn from Braille.

As I have received no unfavourable comment whatever on learning by ear, it would seem that there is an increased recognition of the value of ear-training since Mr. Platt wrote his Manchester Conference paper; and though slipshod ear learning is as much to be deprecated as ever, this change of attitude is very welcome. Speaking personally, when I took over my present Church work at Oxford, a great deal of music had to be rapidly memorised, and I adopted the plan of Brailling the voice parts and learning the accompaniments from playing over. Every Institution, as Mr. Hollins remarks, should be well staffed with music readers, and if these are available, there seems no reason why pupils who have studied harmony should not learn simple music by having it played by the music reader. For anything more elaborate this method would not, in most cases, ensure sufficient accuracy to merit its general use. However, if a blind man is to cope successfully with his seeing brother, he ought to be able to utilise all the means available to him; and as he must largely depend on sighted music, it is desirable that he should be able to learn from reading or playing over, or both, so that he may make the

fullest use of accessible help. It is probable, as time goes on, that the pianola will be used as an aid to music-learning, not only in, but out of school also.

Braille Music Notation.

This subject can receive only the briefest attention, but I hope the musicians present will have an opportunity of discussing it before this Conference concludes. It is most desirable that changes made should be as widely accepted as possible, and to secure this an international committee would be a great help. Institutions, generally speaking, find Braille music as it stands sufficient for their needs, only two (Nottingham and New York) recording the use of other systems. At Nottingham, Braille music is supplemented by Dr. Corbett's system, an example of which appeared in the last issue of the B.M.M. At New York the point system of that name is exclusively used, and evidently with success; but not having the advantage of knowing this system, I cannot do more than mention it. Outside of Institutions there seems to be a general desire for the revision of Braille music, but very few are in favour of more than small changes. This revision desire is very prominent in Germany, and M. de la Sizeranne tells me that, though not conspicuous, it is present in France also. The great desire is for some system which will enable the whole score to be more readily grasped. Mr. Stericker's "Seven Digits" system professes to meet this need, and one of my correspondents considers it the "only solution of the problem"; but the fact that it is entirely different from Braille music, and the necessity of the use of a different frame, have militated against an adequate testing of its usefulness. If a system other than Braille is to be considered, this system is well worth further attention. Reviewing the examples of new methods which have appeared in the B.M.M., the vertical score hymn books have met with

some approval, and I think vertical score for music of a similar degree of difficulty might be more generally used, but it does not lend itself to more elaborate music. Dr. Corbett's system is favoured by some—I am not in a position to say how many—as a fluent way of reading hymn tunes and the like, but it too does not lend itself to anything more elaborate. In my opinion, and I believe it is shared by many, the suggestions from Germany, contained in the letter of Herr Reusch and the article of Herr Haun, are the most valuable contributions we have yet received, and I should like to see the revision of Braille music modelled on those suggestions. Herr Haun's plan of adapting the method of writing to the construction of the music, that is, writing the left or right hand first according to circumstances—is just what is wanted to facilitate more rapid reading.

In conclusion, I fully realise that there is a good deal that has been left untouched upon, as, for instance, No. 1 of my questions to Institutions; but I have a good stock of further particulars on various subjects, which I shall be very pleased to supply if asked for.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen,—From your applause, with which I most heartily agree, I am sure we all feel that we have had a most interesting, instructive and exhaustive paper, and it is now open for discussion. Mr. Platt will open the discussion, and if those who wish to enter into it will hand up cards with their names upon them, I will arrange that they shall take their turn.

MR. H. E. PLATT (Birmingham): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I am before you to day for the ostensible purpose of initiating a discussion on the paper, of which portions have just been read. I trust you have all familiarised yourselves with the whole of its contents, for it affords much food for contemplation, and will assuredly be regarded as a valuable addition to that literature which deals with blind musicians and their prospects. As there is so much with which I am cordially in agreement, and so little to which I can take exception, my position is one of difficulty; nevertheless, I daresay I shall find much to say, and I hope the bell will keep its tongue still until I have spoken.

It is very gratifying to know that a move has been made since our Manchester Meeting, to provide more music for the blind musician. There is no doubt the need was very pressing, and still is so. I think perhaps more activity has been displayed in this matter by the National Lending Library than by any other Association. This Association has added a great deal of music to its catalogue, and also musical literature, but perhaps the most important step it has taken is the formation of a music sub-committee for the purpose of advising its management as to the best method of making the Library more useful to the blind musician. This Committee has among its members more blind than seeing persons—I believe six are blind and four sighted; the sighted members are thoroughly capable of giving a great deal of help to the work that the Committee has before it.

There was a time when the blind could be regarded, perhaps, as little more than objects of charity. In the far off past the City of Exeter made itself one of the pioneers to improve this state of things by establishing, in 1838, the Institution for the Blind. This in due course brought about an alteration. The blind instead of being objects of charity were looked upon as objects of wonderment—in fact they almost came to be looked upon as not human beings at all, but some other race apart from humanity. Now by the kindness of Christian people they have been educated, and are now for the most part intelligent citizens of our empire. I think that people are beginning to realise that the blind have brains, and that these brains can be put to

some good use, and I trust in the near future there will be more opportunities given to the blind to take part in the management of their own affairs. I have no doubt that a great many mistakes have been made in the past by our sighted friends, sometimes through over-enthusiasm, which might have been avoided if the blind could have given them a little guidance; and I hope this opportunity is coming and that these mistakes will be avoided in the future.

We heard yesterday about a universal catalogue of literature. I am going to harp on the same subject. Just as the editor of "Progress" is constantly asked: "Where can I get such and such a Braille book?" so I am frequently getting questions addressed to me—"Does a certain piece of music exist in Braille, and where can I get it?" We do not know what music there is, and where to get it. I am going to suggest to the Sub-Committee of the National Lending Library that they should take this matter into consideration. I know that in Miss Austin we have a lady who will do all we wish if at all possible. I want the Committee to advise the management to place themselves in touch with every publisher of Braille music throughout the world, and to provide themselves with a copy of everything that is published. The library committee has already issued a catalogue in Braille of the music they possess, and this is a most important step. If a copy of every piece of music published were obtained by them, and an annual appendix added to their catalogue to the effect that this had been done, the idea of a universal catalogue would be carried out, and we need only refer to it.

I now wish to touch upon the subject of the revision of Braille notation. It is a knotty question, and not really a point for consideration this afternoon, but there is a very general feeling in this country and also in Germany, that improvements in our Braille notation are possible and desirable. According to Mr. Warrilow, this feeling also exists in France. I think a Committee ought to be formed to thrash this out. It is a highly technical subject, and unless settled by a Committee it will not be done at all. We ought to elect a Committee to make the necessary improvements, or to say that they are impossible. Now the Committee which the Lending Library has formed is really very capable of doing this work, but it should work in conjunction with other Committees. Mr. Warrilow has referred to a Committee formed by the British and Foreign Blind Association. Certainly members of that Committee should co-operate with the Lending Library Com-

mittee or vice versa, and we should bring into our councils publishers of Braille music, and also friends from America, Canada and the Continent. I leave it for subsequent speakers to say more on this point.

There are one or two little matters in the paper to which I might take exception, and I am pleased to be able to differ from Mr. Warrilow in one or two respects. One of these points is ear training. I have not a word to say against this, but I do think that in selecting men for the musical profession a good memory is more important. I have known in my experience pupils in the Blind Institution at Birmingham whose ears have been excellent, but whose memories have been useless. Such as these are of no use for the musical profession. A good memory is of the highest importance.

Then Mr. Warrilow has spoken about improvisation, and seems to imply that the want of ability to improvise on the part of organists reflects on their training. I think there is an analogy between literature and music, and we know that there are men who could write a good essay but could not deliver an impromptu speech, and it is the same with music; a man may write a good composition, but perhaps cannot extemporise. Of course every musician should be able to lengthen out a hymn for a minute or two, and if training can do this it should be done.

Now I am coming to something that Mr. Warrilow has not touched upon much. I think we as blind musicians require more recognition from two bodies of gentlemen; perhaps you will be surprised to hear me say that the first of these bodies is the Institution Committee. I spoke at some length at Manchester three years ago on the advisability of allowing all blind people to learn music as a recreation. I still hold the same views, but I think that the Boards of Management of Institutions attach too much importance to recreation at the expense of music as an education and a profession. Now a few words on music as an education. I believe that it is most valuable as an educational subject for the blind, but I do not think that this is understood by those people who have not studied music other than playing a simple waltz or dance rhythm. Music, it must be admitted, is perhaps the best means by which the ear can be trained to its greatest development; it certainly is a means of training the memory aud also of developing observation and concentration, and to those who have the ability to learn music at all, who can deny that it is a means of developing the hands? And what can a blind man do without the fullest use of his fingers? I say that the pianoforte properly taught must develop the

strength of the fingers, I contend therefore that a subject which will develop the ear, the memory, the powers of observation and concentration, and the fingers, is not a subject to be passed lightly on one side as of no value from an educational point of view. I would urge strongly that music should be regarded as being of more educational value by our Boards of Management, than it is at present.

Mr. Warrilow has also alluded to the hearing of good music, which is of course most necessary for music pupils, especially as many will be placed, after leaving school, in positions where they cannot hear such music. He has also spoken of the advisability of deputising, and his remarks on training choirs are most valuable, and should as far as possible be carried out.

Now to take pupils from a suburban Institution to the city, where a good orchestral concert is to be given, necessitates work on the part of somebody, and in our Institution this devolves upon the teaching staff. I do not think it is fair to expect the teachers, after doing their ordinary routine work, to do this. I think that to bring about Mr. Warrilow's Utopia we want some further help in our Institutions in order that the pupils may have the opportunities which are sometimes available, but cannot be taken advantage of owing to the lack of attendants.

Now, I have alluded to the one class of gentlemen who I think should recognise music as being of more educational value, and should in that way help the blind to become more proficient.

Now I come to the clergy, and with this I shall close. We heard yesterday, and we may say, that the text of this Conference is, "Help the Blind to help themselves." Well, the clergy can do this if they only will, and I think we have a right to expect it of them. Mr. Warrilow has told us that there are between sixty and seventy blind people who are known to him as holding organists' appointments; he also mentioned eighteen who are their own choirmasters. Surely this is an answer to those who say that a blind man cannot train a choir. I have had the management of boys and men for thirty-five years, and have experienced no difficulty; as a matter of fact the Wardens of my church constantly compliment me on the behaviour of the choir. As to the honour of boys, I am a believer in it; you can appeal to the honour of many boys, although of course there are some boys who cannot be touched in this way. My plan has always been to appoint six of the older boys as monitors, and trust to them to keep the others in order. If you get any senior boys who are not quite what they ought to be, then get rid of such. For my own part I don't suppose I have

had to dismiss more than two or three boys on account of their bad behaviour; it is scarcely ever necessary.

I might say in speaking of the value of music to the blind, that it is not only valnable to those who really take it up as a profession. I know of a case in Devonshire of a blind man who wrote and told me he was a basket maker by trade, but had taken the organ of the parish church for seventeen years. I also know a lady who holds a good appointment with the Remington Typewriter Company in London; she is a former pupil of the Birmingham Institution, and she tells me that she never sings for less than half a guinea, and obtains many engagements. These are proofs that music is sometimes a great help to blind people who do not take it up professionally.

Now I would like to make an appeal to the clergy. They are the leaders of Christian thought in this country, and I do implore them not to pass over lightly the application of a blind man for the post of organist when it falls to their lot to consider such an application. If a blind man is inferior to a sighted man, give the appointment to the sighted man; but if the blind man is better than, or even equal to the sighted man, give it to the blind candidate. We only ask for this—it is fair play. I am confident there is nothing a blind man can do better, when properly trained, than officiate at an organ in a place of worship.

I cannot sit down without referring to the great kindness of the clergy and organists of Exeter in allowing many of us to show in their churches the ability of the blind to act as preachers and organists, as they did last Sunday. I believe eighteen blind organists officiated, and in that way they were able to show the clergy and laity of Exeter what the blind can do in this way; and I daresay through the medium of the press the clergy and people of the British Isles will learn what can be done. I have no doubt there is a much better time coming for the blind, and appeal with confidence to the clergy to give the matter more consideration, and to follow in the footsteps of Him they profess to serve.

I. Davidson, mus. bac., l.r.a.m., a.r.c.m. (London) (Henshaw's Blind Asylum, Manchester): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—As a comparatively new comer in the ranks of Teachers of the Blind, I feel somewhat presumptuous in attempting to enlarge upon a paper so admirably drawn up as the one we have had the pleasure of hearing this afternoon. Yet there are a few points raised on which I feel it my duty to speak, and I hope that whatever I may have to say will be

taken as coming from one who, like all present, has the best interest of the blind musician at heart.

The first question with which I wish to deal is "Examinations." My contention is that "Harmony and Counterpoint" should only be taught to those most naturally fitted to receive such instruction. I would add Organists in particular. If we are careful in our choice of pupils to receive such tuition, and providing we commence soon enough I don't think there can be any possible excuse for the "Hymn Tune" being the "conspicuous goal," though I might add it is not the easiest thing in the world of composition to write a good original hymn tune. But what I really want to get at is the general system of examination in our Schools. It appears to be the usual thing to submit pupils for examination to such well-known and estimable bodies as Trinity College and the I.S.M. Now, in a conversation which I had on Monday with a gentleman well-known to you all as the head of one of our great Blind Schools, I gathered that this system was looked upon by his Board as being a "test" of the teaching. I am very definite in my own mind, and I put it to you this afternoon, that this is no *real* test of the teaching, else why are not *all* the pupils submitted. Quite naturally the teacher will prepare only those he knows to have a good chance of passing.

But what happens to those other pupils who are not entered as candidates? I am afraid the ones who really most need the help and guidance of the teacher are often neglected. You cannot blame the teacher whilst this system of examination is in vogue. He must show good results. What I would suggest in preference is that some musician of recognised standing be invited to examine the whole of the music students and submit a report to the Head of the School. For the higher examinations—the R.C.O. and the University—I have nothing but admiration. Naturally the number of candidates presented for these examinations will be much fewer, and the risk of neglect of the other pupils considerably less.

I heartily agree with Mr. Warrilow in saying "that it is advisable for our pupils to qualify before leaving school." The young musician, when launching upon his professional career, has quite sufficient generally to think about in earning his bread and butter.

The next point on which I should like to say a few words comes under the heading, "Institution Services." Where possible there can be no doubt of their desirability. How can we expect to get appointments for our pupils unless we give them some practical experience? To teach them a few anthems and so on is not sufficient. I found no

little difficulty in getting my pupils to learn the accompaniments to anthems at all, and I couldn't altogether blame them when I considered that they had no immediate prospects of playing them for Service. But when I had a serious chat with them, and told them that I proposed, if they were willing to undertake the responsibility of providing the music, to ask our Board to allow us to hold daily Choral Services in our Chapel, the change was electrical. We have daily Choral Evensong with anthem now, and the Services, which are open to the public, are a delight to everyone, the officiating organist most of all. Since the inauguration of these Services, three of our boys have obtained small Church appointments.

A few weeks ago one of our Manchester clergy told me that the "supplying of competent organists was becoming a serious problem in poor parishes, and he considered the blind organ student the possible solution." I would strongly urge all teachers to look for such appointments for their pupils. Though the salary—or perhaps I had better say honorarium—may be small, the experience gained will be invaluable to our students. I would like to utter an old word of warning: "We must be most careful in choosing the pupil for the appointment, or, for the matter of that, for receiving musical instruction at all." His first qualification must be "gentlemanly habits." I had an experience early in my career in the blind world, which is too painful to dwell upon. To return to the original point—where it is found impossible to hold such services as I have described, much may be done in the practice room with organist and choir.

The last point on which I wish to dwell is the "Supply of Braille Music." I don't know that I can altogether endorse the compliment paid to Messrs. Novello. I have long felt that the blind organist in particular is not treated quite fairly in the choice of music offered to him by our great publishing firms. When we at Henshaw's got our printing press to work, it was my desire to specialise in Church music. With this end in view, I asked my worthy chief, Mr. Illingworth, to approach Messrs. Novello—who hold most of the copyrights of Church music—with what result? We were informed that Messrs. Novello preferred to keep all their works on *one* Catalogue. Further comment is unnecessary.

But there is one whose name I know will appeal to all organists: I refer to the late Dr. Alex. Guilmant. It was my good fortune to be of some service to him during his last visit to Manchester.

When I afterwards asked him for permission to print some of his works in Braille, he readily gave me his written authority for the whole

of his sonatas and many smaller compositions. I wish I had his letter with me now. It was a delight to read his expression of the pleasure it was giving him to be of service to the blind organists of this country. I hope before long these works will all be in print.

With regard to Text Books, I sometimes wonder whether the Blind Musician is sincere in his wish for more. We printed at Henshaw's, nearly two years ago, two excellent little books, viz., "Scoring for an Orchestra" (*Vincent*) and "Notes on Musical Form" (*Carroll*). I don't think I am far wrong in saying that we have not sold more than twenty copies of either of them. Results of this kind are somewhat depressing and disheartening.

In conclusion, and apropos of my last remark, I sincerely hope that partisanship for one or other of the various agencies at work for the provision of musical and other publications, will not retard the well-meaning efforts of any; but that all may unite in a single-minded effort n the best interests of *The Blind Musician*.

Mr. T. G. Osborne, f.r.c.o. (Oxford): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I am sure we all must have felt, in listening to Mr. Warrilow's excellent paper, that it was a valiant attempt to express in half-an-hour an entirely inexhaustible subject. He mentioned that for lack of time he was obliged to leave out points which he considered to be of great importance and great interest, and I think that, considering the interest of those portions of the paper which he read to us, it is due to him that one or two points should be dwelt upon.

I propose at least to take one. He remarked that he would not dwell on the sins of the various publishing houses. Now I do not quite see why the publishing houses should get off so easily, and therefore, with your permission, I will read two sentences from his paper commenting on the output of these houses. He remarks, for instance—

> "For over twenty years, from 1886, the British and Foreign Blind Association produced only five shillings' worth of organ music, but happily there is every sign that such negligence is a thing of the past."

The other sentence is—

> "If the organist could get as much stereotyped organ music as would fill half the volumes occupied by one of Scott's novels, he would consider himself exceptionally well looked after."

I am not at all indifferent to the claims of the literary people, and the more literature you turn out the better we shall all be pleased; but I do think by comparison we musicians have been, by pure oversight,

very unfairly treated. This would be very discouraging if we did not know of the almost superhuman energy of Mr. Stainsby, and that this matter only has to be pointed out to him for it to be put right. He is one of those men who by his faith and his work removes mountains of difficulties. Let us hope then that he will not only remove the mountains of difficulties, but that he will also produce the mountains of organ and service music.

I would like to comment upon the action of Messrs. Fourberg, of Leipzig. Would it be possible to introduce this subject into the German press? This would seem a practical way of arousing public opinion with regard to the matter, and as there are certain delegates from Germany here, I thought the suggestion may possibly be useful. We have not suffered much in this country from that kind of thing, though I do notice that Macpherson's Harmony is "by arrangement with," and not "by permission of," the publishers (Joseph Williams & Co.) I am given to understand that the arrangement was no little trouble to Mr. Stainsby and Mr. Warrilow.

Then there is the question of improvisation. Mr. Platt says—rightly, I think—that many people who can write a good composition would be unable to improvise; but may I say I think he rather overlooked the point. What Mr. Warrilow was trying to make out was that the blind music pupils do not always get the chance, and that often they are not encouraged to try to improvise at all. That is so in many Institutions, but not perhaps in all. Mr. St. Clare Hill seems to take everything into consideration, and he and others have grasped the matter. Before it can be said that a person cannot improvise, he must at any rate be put in the way of trying to do so.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen,—May I intervene for a moment to say that there are still fourteen cards from eminent musicians who are anxious to speak on this subject, and if we allow ten minutes we shall exceed the time allotted to its discussion; so I propose, as we have to close at five o'clock, that we limit the speakers to six minutes each, which will bring the discussion within reasonable bounds. I will ring the bell at the end of five minutes, and you will then have a minute left.

MR. H. G. OKE, A.R.A.M. (Margate): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—There is such a lot to be said on this subject that it is a very difficult matter to know where to begin, and what to say, and what to leave unsaid.

As regards Mr. Warrilow's paper, I am perfectly in agreement with Mr.Platt when he says there is very little one can disagree with. I cannot speak much from the point of view of the Institution pupil or the Institution teacher; I can speak more from the point of view of the Blind organist as such, and teacher of sighted pupils. Of course, the biggest question at present from my point of view is the supply of Braille music, which I fully agree is terribly inadequate. We want a great deal more church and organ music, and elementary music for teaching, and music of a rather popular character for pupils who do not wish to learn, or are incapable of learning, the classics.

As regards the National Lending Library, I fully believe that it is going to do a great deal of good work. I have great hope for its future in the musical department. I particularly want to emphasize the importance of the Braille catalogue. I always reckon that I make a point of trying to know of every Braille piece that is to be had; I may not succeed, but I manage to know of a good deal of music. In spite of this, I was absolutely astonished to find what was in the Library. Another thing—I am continually hearing from people such a remark as, "So-and-so is not in the Library." They do not say they do not think it is there, but they say that it is not, and often I am able to correct them. I have often made mistakes myself in thinking that certain things were not there, after only reading the catalogue once. I think that everyone who makes a study of Braille music should get a copy of that catalogue, and join the musical section, if not the whole Library.

As regards the question of musical literature, I think we are perfectly sincere in our demands for more. I should like to ask Mr. Davidson how far he advertised the fact that Henshaw's had published the books on music which he complains did not sell. I can only say that I got them as soon as I was aware of their existence. I was on the look out for an opportunity to get them, but should not have known they were published but for the notice which Mr. Warrilow put in the "Braille Musical Magazine." I think now the fact is getting more known. Mr. Stone put a notice in "Hora Jucunda" a little later, and I hope they will sell better. We are always grumbling about the dearth of music, and surely we should be only too glad to buy that for which we are grumbling, and which we imagine does not exist.

To go back to the Library question, I agree with Mr. Platt that we should be in communication with all the foreign houses, and get all that they print; they turn out a quantity of very good music. I personally am in favour of getting the American publications. There is a diffi-

culty in the alphabet, but I think it worth while to learn this. But then there comes another question, and this touches on a question which I believe was referred to yesterday, namely, the reduction of foreign postage; perhaps I am wrong, but I think it was mentioned. Now, if we could get a reduction in the postage of embossed literature, it would help greatly to get music that is published on the Continent.

Another matter which I think I may just refer to is this: the ignorance of the sighted world at large as to the blind musician. I fully agree with Mr. Warrilow that the blind man can do his work even better than the sighted, but the sighted do not give us credit for this as a general rule. What we ought to do is to convince the sighted we can do quite well what we undertake to do, in the same way as sighted musicians. I have been asked, "I suppose you teach differently to a sighted teacher?" I think we want to combat all ignorance of this kind which appears. Perhaps someone else will deal with the matter more ably than I can.

Mr. W. Norman Andrews (Ontario): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—As my time is very limited, I shall only touch upon a few of the headings under which Mr. Warrilow read his paper. I may say that I have attended many Conferences of Musicians, but I do not think I ever found such harmony as exists here. We generally strike a great many discords, but here there appears to be perfect harmony. In the study of Harmony and Composition we are taught that too much "similar movement" is not good, but that "contrary movement" gives vigour and life. A little "contrary" may be of benefit to us this afternoon.

However, I congratulate Mr. Warrilow on his most excellent and exhaustive paper, and I heartily endorse every word he has had to say. It appears to me, as it has done to others, that there is no room for controversy.

Now, about examinations, I may say that in England you have a very satisfactory system and high standard of musical examinations, such as those of Trinity College, the Royal Academy and College of Music, etc. I wish we had similar conditions in Canada.

For the Ontario Institution for the Blind, we have drawn up a thoroughly graded course, based principally upon the examinations demanded by the Incorporated Society of Musicians here in England. The Department of Education of the Ontario Government appointed an Examiner each year to examine pupils in music. I might say the most competent man is secured for the purpose. At present one of

the best educated musicians in Canada—Dr. Albert Ham, an Examiner of Toronto University and the Western University, London, Ontario; also President of the Canadian Guild of Organists and Organist and Choirmaster of St. James Cathedral, Toronto—is the appointee. The Educational Department pay all fees and successful candidates receive testimonials signed by the Examiner, Musical Director, and Principal of the Institution. These examinations lead up to the higher examinations of the University.

I heartily congratulate you on the number of blind students passing the examinations of the Royal College of Organists. Some few years ago many of us had hoped, and I believe Sir Frederick Bridge had advocated, the Royal College of Organists extending their examinations to Canada. For some reason it was not done. A Canadian Guild of Organists has now been formed, taking for its model, R.C.O. The Governor-General (Earl Grey) and Sir Frederick Bridge are two of our patrons. I might say here that I was appointed with two others to make out the curriculum. I suggested that a clause, similar to that of the R.C.O., should be inserted respecting the examination of blind students. I met with strong opposition, some of the Council contending that the blind would not take the examinations. After some discussion I succeeded in carrying my point, and you may imagine my pride, Mr. Chairman, when I was informed that the first successful candidate for the C.G.O. Examination was a blind boy from our Ontario Institution.

Mr. Warrilow touched upon the matter of "Ear Training," and I wish to most emphatically endorse him in this essential part of a musical education.

As regards attending and taking part in concerts, I believe these absolutely necessary to a blind pupil's success. If our policy is, "How best to help the blind to help themselves," every detail that will help them in the future should be taught during the period of student life. To-day is the student's apprenticeship, when he is being prepared and fitted for the coming struggle of earning his or her own living. Attending concerts and listening to others are of great educational value, and the taking part in playing and singing in concerts, brings the blind and their ability before the people.

The general public are ignorant as to the intelligence and ability of the blind. I remember on one occasion I took a boy to a town only twenty or thirty miles from the School, to given an organ recital at one of the Churches. The boy was looked upon as a great novelty. The Church was crowded, and so captivated was the audience by the boy's

playing, that they refused to leave the building until requested to do so by the Rector.

Bringing such blind students before the public, not only dispels erroneous ideas that some people have of the blind, but gives the blind artiste a splendid advertisement for the future.

As to Staff Notation, it is my opinion that every blind student intending to become a teacher should have a thorough knowledge of Staff Notation. If the blind expect to teach the sighted pupil, the blind must of necessity understand the sighted pupil's music or notation.

At the Brantford Conservatory of Music we had a Kindergarten system of teaching the notes, marks of expression, etc., by wooden characters. These I passed around the Choral Class and explained their meaning. The pupils were simply delighted with the idea, and remarked, "This is splendid, and just what we need." We have now a board grooved with the ten lines, representing our stave and all the music characters in metal, and by this means our blind students receive a thorough knowledge of staff notation, which is of the greatest importance to the blind teacher.

There are two ways which appeal to me, and I learn from others who have had years of experience, coincide with my views that we may help the blind teacher :—

1st. Some experienced official could visit the young teacher when starting out in life, and give assistance by saying a few words of commendation, at a recital given by the teacher, for the purpose of introduction to the community in which he or she has decided to try their fortune. An introduction of this nature would help considerably.

In the second place, an Annual Convention of Blind Teachers should be held at some central point, when matters of interest touching their particular teaching work could be discussed. Difficulties peculiar to the blind teacher would in this way be very largely overcome, and teachers would receive valuable assistance in their profession.

Lectures, Piano, Organ, and Vocal Recitals could also be given, and all this would inspire them with renewed energy and confidence, and they would return to their work full of enthusiasm.

As regards piano tuners, I learn you demand a high standard of examination in England, and that they must hold a Certificate before receiving recognition. This course is certainly excellent, for you protect the qualified tuner, as well as the public, from imposition. The manner in which the Royal Normal College for the Blind conducts this department is well worthy of our imitating in Ontario.

By what I can understand, you have difficulty in supplying the

blind organist with a necessary tune book for his particular Church or Chapel. At the Ontario Institution for the Blind we have a printing press and music type, and have had printed books of music containing, not all the tunes of any denominational book, but those tunes most commonly used. This helps the blind organist very considerably, and if we could print an anthem when required, or a new voluntary when requested, the needs of the organist and choirmaster would be well supplied.

You have no doubt noticed by my remarks that, while we acknowledge the elevating and refining influenre of music, we have also kept in view its commercial value to the blind, recognizing that music is an art that will help the blind to help themselves in securing a livelihood.

Much more I should like to say, but my time is up.

Herr Reusch (Darmstadt): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—Before entering into details, I should like to tell you what my friend wished me to say. He asked me to state that he hoped that before we altered the system of Braille music we would keep in mind the great blessing and international character of the system as it now exists. I also would like to express for myself the same sentiments, and feel sure that many of you will agree.

I have seen from the Musical Magazine that you buy music from Germany, and we are very thankful to obtain the music published in England. May it be always so.

Now I would like to speak on a matter that has occupied our thoughts in Germany for some time, and I observe from the Musical Magazine that the English blind are similarly situated. I should like to mention that the two signs for the tie and the slur used in England are the direct opposite to those used in Germany and France. I should be very glad—and not only I, but also my comrades in Germany—if we could come to some agreement on this point. When we study, for example, the "Songs without Words," we experience great difficulty because our pupils always make mistakes on account of this different meaning of the slur and tie sign. And on the other hand I should like to say that the new edition of Bach wants a new sign for the tie if it is to be translated into German.

As far as we can see, in Germany we want two new signs for the long slur, to show the beginning of the long slur and the end, and then we could make use of the two signs we now have in use for the special tie sign among these long slurs.

As regards what was said by Mr. Osborne, I do not quite understand what he means; but I would be very pleased to have a little talk with him before I leave here, and will certainly do what I can in this direction in Leipzig.

Mr. J. Dawber, mus. bac., Cantab: Said that in his opinion all blind persons should be brought in contact with music, not necessarily with a view to their making it a profession. In many cases that would be an impossibility.

He also advocated local musical examinations. This, he contended, brought the blind in touch with the seeing, and it was also the means of showing the public that the blind musical students could hold their own. During the last two years 130 blind candidates had entered for the I.S.M. Practical Examinations, and of these only six had failed, while more than 25 per cent. had obtained honours.

He trusted that some tangible benefit would result from the discussion of this important subject.

Mr. Stericker (Aberdeen): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—Our Canadian friend, Mr. Norman Andrews, said there had been no discord here, but a most harmonious meeting. I am afraid I shall be regarded as a false relation—not only as a discord. However, I hope you will not be cross relations to me.

The first point upon which I would like to throw out a suggestion is with regard to text books. In such books as Macpherson's Harmony, I have always experienced great difficulty in finding the place quickly. Would it not be possible to put the musical examples, say two or three spaces in from the beginning of the line? I mean this, that the letterpress could always commence at the beginning of the line, but the music should be at the second, third, or fourth space. That would make it at once clear to the reader where to begin. That is merely a suggestion.

Now, about examinations. I think it is high time, as so many blind candidates are being examined, that something was done in the way of allowing the paper work to be done in Braille. We blind have a right to claim that we should work our papers in Braille. It causes a great difficulty to young people coming from the country not to be able to do this. I have a case in point just now, and do not know how we shall manage for the amanuensis. It is very difficult for a stranger to work with a blind boy or girl.

Now, I would like to say something about the training of children—not boys alone, but girls also, who are often worse to manage. I might, perhaps, give you an illustration. I believe in the honour of children very much, for I remember once a boy got behind my back and imitated all my gestures, and acted in a very amusing way to the children; but that boy got such a thrashing afterwards from the other boys that the offence was not repeated.

Now, the great point I want to come to is this: there is, as you all know, in the musical world a great deal of unrest with regard to the notation question. We have the Haun method, the Tibach method, the New York, the Belgian, the Corbett, the Warrilow, and lately some suggestions by Herr Reusch. Now I know that students in public Institutions do not feel this want, and the reason is this: they hear plenty of music, and are seldom called upon to learn what they have not heard previously. Then there are readers at their beck and call for two or three hours a week. It is very different when we get out into the world. For years after I left College I learnt by ear and by reading, but I found as business began to press that I forgot some things, and I had not a reader always at hand. Later, my sister lived with me and dictated a lot in Braille, and by that time I had got a great deal of Braille music together, and had a huge library. I got all the music that the British and Foreign Blind Association published, and all that was published by other houses. I got a lot of music together then, but was so busy that I could not learn it, and had to take it to bed with me, and instead of sleeping had to brood over Beethoven's Sonatas and other things in the night. What was the reason of that? It was because it had to be memorised. The result was that, after many experiments I invented a system by which I did not always need to memorise my music; I could read it so well at first sight that it was possible to teach it and follow a pupil. For hymn tunes I can read so quickly that, if I have a suitable desk at the organ, I can put my one hand on the book and the other on the keys, and play the hymns.

The next point is this: that if you take a book of music (and I have books of all kinds of music copied out), and put my hand down at random on any passage in one of the books I have copied out, although I don't know the music, I can at once tell you the note and the pitch, which you cannot do in Braille, because you have not got the pitch there.

Well, I must stop, but I will just say that I have a number of books in Exeter. I have brought all kinds of music with me. I have a frame at the Exhibition, and if you want to buy one of my guides, you

can get them from the British and Foreign Blind Association. I shall be happy to show my system to anybody to-morrow.

Mr. B. Evered Tewkesbury (New York): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I am very glad to be here to speak on this interesting topic, which has been so well dealt with by other speakers.

I am heartily in accord with those who are in favour of examinations for blind musicians. I would say that at New York, until three years ago, for twenty years the music pupils of our school had taken the examinations in music given by the American College of Musicians, and many of them received the Associateship Certificate, and more than one obtained a Fellowship.

Three years ago, largely owing to the efforts of William B. Waite, the Education Department of the University of the State of New York instituted examinations in music for blind students. At that time our examinations were turned from the American College of Music to the State Examinations, for they realised we were taking examinations by the State in all other subjects. The Education Department of the State gives certificates for music (practical and instrumental), which includes harmony, counterpoint, etc. A certificate is granted to the pupils who have the rank of College of Musicians in all subjects.

There is a blind man who graduated from our school about fifteen years ago and went to the South. He has received the Fellowship of two Colleges. He was organist of the church and conductor of the choir. Three years ago he came to us, and is now the Teacher of Music, and is a most efficient member of the staff.

Now, one word about the educational value of music. I can endorse what Mr. Platt said in favour of music, both as a musician and as administrator of a school. It seems to me that music should hold an equally important place with other subjects. An equal chance should be given. Pupils should not be taught music to the exclusion of other subjects, but music should not be set aside, for it is practically the only art—perhaps *the* only art—that a blind person can deal with at all. The arts of literature (poetry and prose) and music are practically the only arts he can enter. Music has a science; it has a history; there is a great deal more in it than people realise. It is a sad thing that many of the principals of the schools for the blind know so little about it. This might be easily remedied; it is not necessary that a person should have a beautiful voice and skilful fingers before one can study music. Principals of schools can study music and be perfectly familiar with the theory, and know what the teachers are doing with the pupils, and

whether the results are what they should be. I would like to encourage all the principals of schools for the blind, who do not know music, to take this matter seriously to heart, and make an effort to study music as a duty they owe to their schools.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Sir Francis Campbell: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—There was an allusion made just now to Novello's. I cannot help thinking there must have been a mistake, because Novello's people encourage us to print their music. They made the College a present of all the volumes of anthems, etc., which they publish. I feel sure there must be a mistake.

I want to say also, in regard to the question of blind organists and choirs, some years ago I got a chance for a young lady to be allowed a trial for four Sundays. The clergyman said she might have this chance, but he was quite sure she could not succeed. She had the trial, but the clergyman did not attend the choir practices. This went on for two Sundays, and then the clergyman's wife said to him, "You admit that she did well last Sunday and the Sunday before, but yet you won't go and see whether she can train the choir." The third week the clergyman went to the choir practice, and found all the boys quiet and well-behaved. He walked up the aisle and said, "I have never before seen you behave so much like young gentlemen; what does it mean?" The leading boy said, "Sir, I am the head boy here, and I have told these others that if one of them does anything this young lady doesn't approve of, I will knock his head," and he added, "They know I'll do it." The young lady got the appointment and kept it.

Mr. W. H. Illingworth: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I have taken the opportunity of putting down a few notes so that I may make my remarks as brief as possible. To my mind this discussion, like most of those at our Conferences, has so far contained a great deal of reiteration, and there has perhaps been a lack of real criticism, beyond saying that we have not got sufficient music, and that it is difficult to get places for our musicians when trained. I venture to mention one or two other points.

In the past, blind education and employment has been retarded, as many of us know, by nothing so much as inter-institution or inter-personal jealousies, and we must see to it that it is not going to be the same with regard to the development of music and literature. We have several presses at work in this country at the present moment,

and I have heard this afternoon of three distinct and different Committees all engaged on the selection of music. Now, why are all these Committees engaged in the selection of music in London? One is the Library's Committee, another the Committee of which we have notices on our seats, and the third an Advisory Committee to the British and Foreign Blind Association for the selection of music. Surely this is an overlapping of work that could very well be done by one Committee.

As regards the Library of Music that has been mentioned, the same remark applies as would apply to ordinary literature.

I say that these three Committees, working as they appear to be, will not supply the needs of the country. Local requirements need local consideration. The press engaged in printing music for Scotland, for instance, requires the advice of people in Scotland; what is required in London is not necessarily required in Scotland; and what is wanted in Scotland is not wanted in Manchester. It appears to me that the multiplication of Committees for advising on the production of music, all in one centre, is a mistake.

Then you must see that partisanship for one or other of the Braille presses can only tend to a loss to the blind. We must keep that in view. No matter whether one or other of the presses is going to produce music or literature at a greater rate, or a cheaper rate, what we want is to get the music by some means or other, in order that the demand may be supplied; and if London, Edinburgh, and Manchester cannot do it, let us have more. Get the music supplied by some means. There is a great scarcity of music for the blind, and of course let all the presses consult each other as to what they print.

As regards the prejudice against blind organists, I say it is entirely due to ignorance on the part of the Church and the public. This Conference and recent happenings in Exeter may have in some degree removed this. Yet there has been a certain amount of justification for it. A blind musician cannot afford to be a boor, and I hope much from Lady Campbell's paper on the social education of the blind, and of enforcing the necessity of politeness as of great importance—quite as important as good talent, good ear, good memory, to the success of a blind musician.

MR. STAINSBY: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I am glad to follow Mr. Illingworth, because I do not understand the drift of his argument. He speaks about three Consultative Music Committees, and thinks they are all in London; but one is in Oxford. That does not matter. I may inform him that each of those three Com-

mittees has a distinct work of its own. The one organised by Mr. Warrilow and the one organised by Miss Austin are to advise what music should be stereotyped or hand written respectively—the one in connection with Mr. Warrilow's fund and the other in connection with the National Lending Library. The Consultative Committee of the British and Foreign Blind Association has a wider scope; not only will that Committee advise the Association as to what music should be stereotyped and published, but it will investigate questions relating to the Braille and other music notations, with the object of ascertaining the needs of the blind, and their views and wishes on the subject of music. I think that after this explanation, Mr. Illingworth will agree that there is no real overlapping.

Mr. Illingworth also spoke about the multiplication of presses. I am not in favour of this, and to-morrow, Mr. Chairman, I am going to refer to "playing at business," as I call it. I do not believe in having a number of small departments—the blind have suffered much from this policy in the past. If we have one or two large publishing houses, and all came to their aid, we may do some good. A printing house that is run on small lines must necessarily be inefficient; you cannot get away from it. I have walked through some of the largest factories in the country, and found that they turn out the best work because they are the best equipped. Do not let us overlap, but let us concentrate our efforts. Let the schools do the work of the education; the libraries distribute literature; and the publishing houses produce it. I feel sure we shall then be doing very much more effective work.

I must say one word with reference to Mr. Davidson's remarks. Mr. Chairman, Messrs. Novello are the best friends that blind musicians have. That is all I have to say.

Mr. Guy Campbell: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—There is one point that has been slightly hinted at by Mr. Illingworth, which I think must be spoken of in connection with musicians. It is not merely sufficient to have your blind man or woman a musician, and to let it go at that; you must train them if you want them to be successful, in platform etiquette and platform technicalities. Since the age of six I have gone on to platforms with blind and seeing people, and it is surprising how few of the blind know what constitutes etiquette, and if they do not know what are regarded as the technicalities of a performer they do not succeed in pleasing the public.

It is much easier for a blind person to succeed as an organist because there are scarcely any technicalities to learn with regard to

your platform; you go to the organ loft, and after you have finished you leave it. The next easiest form is that of the pianist; the most difficult is that of the singer. I would like to commend to all blind musicians who are engaged in teaching singing, to get their friends (if they do not know themselves) to explain to their pupils how they should stand while singing; because, I am sorry to say, they do not often understand that. Then they should be taught to cultivate the power of enunciation by a free movement of the lower jaw; this affects the singing of many. After that they should endeavour to learn the art of smiling. If you notice seeing artistes, you will find that they smile, more or less with "a smile that won't come off." Perhaps you have not thought about this, but I can assure you it is most important. If you can only get the blind to smile pleasantly, such criticisms as we so often hear: "Oh, they are beautiful musicians, but too painful to look at; why can't they sing behind a curtain"?—would not be heard. If you want blind musicians to go forward and get public engagements, they must be as much like seeing people as is possible.

And now a word as to the seeing people who take the blind musicians on and off the platform. I beg of you not to take them by the hand, and lead them up as if they were dancing bears or something of that kind. You must yourselves learn the technicalities. Has it never occurred to you that nine out of every ten who undertake the duty always bring the blind person on to the platform in the wrong way; they put themselves between the people and the musician. Then you must learn too how to seat them at the piano, and tell them which side the audience is. I have known a blind person play magnificently, and at the end of the performance get up and gravely bow to the piano!

Now those are the kind of things that Institution Committees can do a great deal to put right, by seeing that the teachers they employ learn these technicalities, and see that they are properly done.

Sir Francis Campbell: I want to say a word with regard to Mr. Warrilow's fund. Mr. Warrilow said that he had secured £34. I will be very glad to make this up to £50. (Applause).

Mr. H. J. Wilson: It is not my intention to speak about music, because I know nothing about the subject, but I do know that my wife suffers when I attempt to sing in Church.

What I want to say is with regard to a subject very little known to people in London, and that is that there is in existence a Ticket Bureau

for the Blind, the object of which is to obtain tickets for concerts, lectures, recitals, etc., for distribution among blind people who cannot afford to spend money on recreation. Unsold tickets are solicited, and during the first year about 2,500 were given away, and now over 200 per month are given to the blind in London. The distribution of these tickets takes place through the Organising Secretary of the Metropolitan and Adjacent Counties Union for the Blind.

That is all that I wish to say; I thought it a cognate subject, and that you ought to know what is being done.

A Voice: Will some future speakers please refer to the pianola and its use for teaching music to the blind?

Mr. Patrick Keily, a.r.c.o. (Alford, Lincs.): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I must return to the needs of blind musicians for more Braille music. The appeal has been made mainly on behalf of organists; but I appeal on behalf of isolated blind music teachers—we who live, let us say, twenty miles from any centre, where there is no musician of any consequence to give advice or help, and where the musical talent of the district is so poor that no one can give information that may be safely followed.

Now my experience for two years in a rural district of Lincolnshire has been rather surprising to me. I find I can get very little Braille music that will suit the particular requirements of that district. There are two reasons for this: firstly, we do not want anything enormously difficult or complicated; and, secondly, we want something that can be purchased cheaply by the seeing. I find there is a great lack of Braille music pieces published in sets for sighted people. I enquired the other day about some pieces which I thought would be useful for teaching. I find they are published at 1/- each—24/- the set. There is, for instance, the "Star Folio, which is very popular, and, while I do not recommend the embossing of all the poorer pieces in this, I do recommend the printing of the best. We can then select from these popular collections, and be certain of having some music that our pupils will buy. We want popular music printed for the use of small music teachers.

Rev. R. M. Ryan (Feltham): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—After sending my card to the Chairman, I regretted having done so, because I saw there was a plethora of speakers. It is now late, and the subject on which I wished to speak could not be done justice to

in five minutes, but I do not wish for the time to be extended. The Committee have very kindly afforded me, or rather will afford me to-morrow evening, an opportunity of addressing the Conference at 8 o'clock, and I shall then submit to you the thoughts that I had intended expressing now. I think it will be much better than if I were to enter on the subject at this late hour.

There were three points I wished to bring forward, but I could not do them justice in five minutes.

Mr. W. H. Tate (Bradford): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—It is not so much to continue this discussion that I have risen, but rather to express in a word my opinion of Messrs. Novello, whose good name a little while ago was rather aspersed.

We have in Bradford an Association of Organists and Choirmasters, numbering about 80. At Christmas time I wrote to Messrs. Novello to enquire whether we could purchase some sets of anthems for our Reference Library, and they sent us twenty volumes, the value of which must have been nearly £30, and when I asked about payment, they made the Association a present of the books.

If it be the experience of some of the gentlemen here that Messrs. Novello have not met in the nicest possible manner a request made to them, I would suggest that when their plans are further advanced the firm should be again approached, when the results may probably be equally gratifying.

One word upon Mr. Warrilow's paper. He did not touch on one point with regard to the future, which I would commend to any Institution Directors who may be present, namely, the possibilities of Choirs. He spoke of training teachers, and that every pupil should have a chance of learning music at least in an elementary degree. May I say that if the choirs of Institutions were trained sufficiently to render their efforts of interest to the public, and were encouraged to give musical services and concerts, a wide area of public interest might be created, affording many opportunities for increased knowledge of, and love for, the blind, and also helpful ways of adding to the funds. We have a small choir in Bradford, of which Miss Lister is the chief soprano. I think the choir must have brought in nearly £500 by their performances during the last half-dozen years.

The Chairman: Miss Austin wishes me to say that she does not wish to speak, but that she will put before the Committee of her Library the suggestion of Mr. Platt that the Library should acquire all

music published abroad in the Braille system; she cannot, however, be responsible for their decision.

Rev. E. G. Cocks (Devonport): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I am a stranger at Conferences of this kind, this being the first I have ever attended. I came to learn, and I am pleased to be able to say that I shall not go away disappointed. I am quite in agreement with much that has been said in the course of this discussion, and also in the estimable paper that has been read to us by Mr. Warrilow.

I should like to say, with regard to the paper, how much I, as a musical man, endorse a great deal that Mr. Warrilow has said. I have never heard a subject so lucidly put before an audience. I wish to associate myself with those who have congratulated him.

So far as my experience has gone, I have come to the conclusion that there are some of us who see who may envy a great deal that our blind brothers and sisters enjoy. They have an insight and enthusiasm with regard to some things that seem to be denied to us. My object in standing here is perhaps threefold. I happen to have been in my early days a choir boy at St. George's Chapel Royal, Windsor, and was able to learn what I know of music under the best possible conditions. And I am able to testify to the fact that if you put choir boys on their honour they will rise to the occasion. We at Windsor were a body of boys under one master, living in one house; we had to attend services twice a day. Occasionally our master had to leave us, for he was also a Lay Clerk. One of our Canons in Residence was a Devonshire man, who occupied at one time the position of Rector of Bovey Tracey. He once said to the master, "The boys are always good when you are with them, but they seem a great deal better when you are away." Our master said it was a great source of satisfaction to him to know that his boys were able to behave as well, or even better, when he was absent.

May I further add my testimony as to the value of work by blind choirs? There is a gentleman on the platform at this moment who does not know me, but I know him. I refer to Sir Francis Campbell. My first curacy, twenty years ago, was at St. Paul's, Upper Norwood, and once a year we had the advantage and joy of listening to the choir so admirably trained at the Royal Normal College; and the presentation of the service that they gave us was one of those treats I have always treasured in my mind, and

shall treasure so long as God gives me life and health and strength to live. No one knows with what magnificent art they were able to render "Hail, gladsome light." There may be an irony in it if you like, but they sang the words as I have never heard them sung before or since. It is a joy to me, therefore, to be able to add my testimony as to that which Sir Francis Campbell has been able to inaugurate in the matter of music rendered by a blind choir trained by a blind organist. I am able to add my testimony as to the value of the work, and I hope I may satisfy to some extent the request made by one of the speakers with regard to the clergy helping those who have not the gift of sight. If at any time I have the opportunity of choosing between a sighted and a blind organist, and I find that the blind organist is the better of the two, I shall not hesitate for a single moment to give the appointment to the blind musician.

Mr. Warrilow is right when he says that the power of influence in the training of choristers is of paramount importance. I am certain there are more sighted organists than we are aware of who find that the work among their choir boys is not the pleasantest of the duties they have to perform, and it is not always the fault of the boys. That power of personality or magnetism is what tells most in the training of choir boys.

With regard to teaching music as a recreation—I quite agree with this.

I happen to come from Devonport, and this morning, while at the Exhibition, I was asked by a gentleman, "Where is Devonport?" I thought I could best answer this question by asking another. I said, "Do you know the largest arsenal in the world? Well, the largest arsenal is at Devonport, and from Devonport I come." When I mentioned Plymouth, which is our sister town, that gave him the idea of our situation at once. In Devonport we are celebrating our Jubilee this year, and we are hoping to celebrate it in some definite form as regards education. We are endeavoring to make the inmates of our Blind Institution believe that music is a help to them as a recreation, and we believe that in giving it to them as a recreation, we are doing something for them educationally. We have a lady teacher who is an excellent mistress, a capable singer, and one who knows a great deal about voice production. She is able to teach those who have never been taught before; she can produce their voices and teach them very well. A few days ago I heard a song from one of her pupils, who had lost his sight quite recently, and for one who had had only a few lessons, it was a splendid performance, and was a credit to the teacher

and to the Institution. Some of my Committee are present here to-day. We are striving to the utmost of our power to make the lives of those who are afflicted as bright and happy and cheerful as we possibly can.

Mr. H. C. Souter, A.R.C.O. (Exeter): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I think we have all listened with the greatest pleasure to Mr. Warrilow's paper, particularly the musicians amongst us. There is one point, however—the subject of examination syllabuses—which I should like to mention, and I may say here it is the higher grade examinations I refer to.

Before offering my suggestions to you as to the removal of what I consider to be an evil in this direction, I will try to make you understand the position. It very often happens that a piece, or pieces, which have to be prepared for these examinations, are not printed in Braille. That means extra time, work, and extra money to be spent on the part of the blind candidate. I often see—and probably many of you have often seen—something like this: a sighted person who is going in for the Fellowship, gets hold of a syllabus. He looks at the syllabus and says, "Ah, I see there are three pieces set down, where can I get them? I will go to such and such a shop." In Exeter he will go to Guest's, or in Manchester, etc., somewhere else. He can probably get what he wants at a comparatively low price. Then there is another picture: a blind person is also going in for the Fellowship Examination; he looks at the syllabus (and I am thinking of this month's syllabus), and he sees there are three pieces set down. One of these pieces only is in Braille, or rather in stereotyped Braille. I am quite aware that there is a great deal of manuscript Braille music in the National Lending Library, and Miss Austin is greatly responsible for that fact, and I think that she and her Committee deserve the gratitude of the blind. I am speaking now, however, of printed music. Now the blind candidate finds that only one of the pieces is printed; well, how is he going to get the other two? And I want you to understand I am speaking of a very high standard examination. The two pieces would not do the blind any harm if they also were printed in Braille. He has to get them specially written, and they cost both time and money to put them into Braille.

Now that is an evil; but it is not all. Under different circumstances this could be prevented. How comes it about that you have music given in these examinations which is not in Braille? Well, briefly put, the answer is that the authorities do not know what is in Braille. I

have spoken to blind people on the subject, and they say, "That is all right, but the examiners do not provide for the blind." Of course, it is not to be expected that they do; but on the other hand (and I think a lot of blind people know it is quite true) the examiners of the Royal College of Organists do not put obstacles in the way of blind candidates for the sake of doing so. We know very well that they do what they can to help us and to put us on a level with the sighted. They have given us extra time—an extra half hour on each paper—and I would say to my sighted friends who are organists that I mention this fact because the blind owe a debt of gratitude to the Royal College of Organists, and if my remarks are published I want them to get to the Royal College of Organists.

I think all the blind recognise—and they certainly ought to—what the Royal College of Organists have done. The suggestion with regard to extra time came from Henshaw's; and, by the way, I came from there. I remember Dr. Harding came and asked me about this matter, and very soon after that the extra half hour for each paper was granted. Now I see that quite recently they have introduced Braille. As I said, they do not put obstacles in the way for the sake of doing so.

You will perhaps say, "All that is well and good, but how are these things to be altered?" My suggestion is this: co-operation or affiliation between the British and Foreign Blind Association and the Royal College of Organists. The great evil of to-day among the blind is isolation or exclusiveness. A lady met me on Sunday, and commenting on the number of blind people in Exeter at present, said, "It is all very good, there are a lot of enthusiastic people in the work, but outside the blind world there is nobody interested." I am afraid that is true. We may ask them to become our friends, but if you want them to become really interested in certain work, give them something to do in connection with it. I recommend that the British and Foreign Blind Association should affiliate with the Royal College of Organists, persuade some of their Council to become members of the British and Foreign Blind Association, and to take expert blind musicians on to the R.C.O. Council, and then we should get more music in Braille. They would have an official position, and I think matters would be substantially improved. Until isolation and exclusiveness are done away with we shall never improve materially.

Mr. W. M. Stone (Edinburgh), speaking from the body of the Hall, said that he had been asked to state that for the Diploma Examination of the Incorporated Society of Musicians the questions were now prepared in Braille and answers in Braille were permitted.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have had a most interesting discussion, and I think all the speakers have kept to their point remarkably well. I will call upon Mr. Warrilow to reply.

MR. H. C. WARRILOW, F.R.C.O. (Oxford): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I must first thank you all for your kind appreciation of my paper. I must thank Sir Francis Campbell also for his very kind offer of a contribution to the music fund, and I hope others will follow his example.

I must touch upon one or two points that have been raised in the discussion, though it will be impossible to deal with all. I agree with Mr. Platt's universal catalogue, but until this comes about, I think we should know of the music that is published by the various publishing houses, either through the Braille Musical Magazine or the issue of a small catalogue. It is certainly time that the excellent books printed at Henshaw's should be made generally known. Someone told me he had only heard of them this morning, and a great many, I am sure, do not know of them at all. I applied for a catalogue, but received no answer.

Mr. Platt's remarks about the music memory I entirely agree with, but I lay great stress on ear training, because it is very necessary that we should not produce mechanical musicians. It is quite possible for a man to play quite accurately and yet nobody wants to listen to him.

With regard to staff notation, I think it is most necessary, if this is to be taught, that something practical should be done—either that the pupil should have seeing pupils to teach, or that Mr. Lucas's system might be examined, as it involves a knowledge of the clef. That is well worth looking into, I think.

With regard to Mr. Stericker's remarks, I have noted a few suggestions with regard to hymn tunes. I think this subject of Braille music is a most important one, and we ought to have a meeting to-morrow night (I do not know whether eight o'clock will be suitable). I think that we ought to say eight o'clock to-morrow night for a meeting to discuss this important subject.

MR. STAINSBY (London): Ladies and Gentlemen,—Before closing, it is my pleasure and privilege to propose a vote of thanks to Councillor Charles J. Ross for the able and impartial manner in which he has presided over this session.

MR. PLATT (Birmingham): I have been asked to second that, and do so with much pleasure. We have not had much discord or much

false relation, but even if that had been so, our Chairman, I think, would soon have turned it into concord. I have great pleasure in seconding the vote of thanks.

(The resolution was put to the meeting and carried unanimously).

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen,—I thank you very much. It has been a most harmonious afternoon, and I have been deeply interested and much instructed by what I have heard. I came here for instruction, and have not been disappointed. May I impress upon you that you should insist upon the value of periodical examinations, and further upon the great importance of rhythm? I view with wonder all I have heard this afternoon, because when I opened this meeting I told you of a famous ancestor of mine a hundred years ago, who was an organist in Somersetshire; he had none of these marvellous aids; his wife used to read the music to him, and I remember the bass was all figured in those days. It has all been very interesting to me, and I have to thank you for giving me such a very pleasant afternoon.

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

CHAIRMAN : Henry Gadd, Esq., J.P.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Yesterday afternoon I intimated that the powers that be had refused to postpone the Coronation, because they were unaware of the importance of our Conference. In the same way the Law Courts have refused to stop their proceedings, and Parliament is still sitting. The result is that our Member of Parliament for this City, Mr. Duke, whom I was so anxious to secure as Chairman for to-day, wrote me a few days since that he feared he would be unable to keep his engagement; and writing subsequently from Plymouth, he told me that he had an important arbitration case on, and could not possibly come. Under the circumstances the Vice-President of the West of England Institution for the Blind (Mr. Henry Gadd), ex-Mayor of the City, one of our foremost citizens, who has been connected with the work of the blind for more than twenty years, has kindly consented to take the chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen,—If you can't be of much use be of little use. I remember some years ago attending a meeting where an unannounced speaker addressed the audience. He said, "I find on the bills the names of many who do not speak, while the names of the gentlemen who do speak are never used." I do not profess to be an eloquent chairman like Mr. Duke would have been, but if I can render you a little service this morning I shall be very pleased.

I am very gratified to see such a good attendance, in spite of all the counter attraction of our lovely scenery and lovely weather. It shows your interest in the work. I have frequently been a member of Conferences and have noticed that the delegates have many of them been conspicuous by their absence, and have allowed the bulk of the work to be done by a few. You all seem to be on duty bent, and I trust that the result of this morning's paper and discussion will be very useful. I do not intend to occupy your time very long, because I do not wish to intrude upon the speaker's paper, which I am sure is a very valuable one, and will give a number of hints on the after-care of the blind. I want you to recognise with me how much we admire the various traits of

character which blind people possess. I am very much struck with their resignation; with their patience; with the interest they take in all their surroundings; and with their desire to help one another. These points could be enlarged upon, but I refrain. Our blind friends set us an excellent example of resignation to God's will.

The subject this morning is the After-care of the Blind. I was talking to Sir Francis Campbell a few minutes ago, and was very pleased with his remarks with reference to his work at Norwood, with which most of us are familiar—a work which our late King fittingly recognised by bestowing the honour of knighthood upon Sir Francis. He told me this interesting fact—that eighty-eight per cent. of their pupils are earning their own living. That is a remarkable record, and shows that the after-care of the blind is not forgotten at the Norwood Training School, and I have no doubt the twelve per cent. unaccounted for are partially earning their living. It is probable that if we were to ask how many really turn out badly the number would be very small.

I want to say one word about the After-care of the Blind. We in Exeter suffer from the neglect of the public. We are unfortunately obliged to stop our mat making sometimes, and also to cut down other departments, because we have the greatest difficulty in finding customers willing to purchase the goods when finished. I do hope our friends in Exeter and elsewhere will do what they can, and so give the inmates of our Blind Institution plenty of work. We are not crippled in Exeter for want of funds, I am thankful to say. We have our own freehold property; but we are often crippled from want of sympathy on the part of the public who do not buy the goods, and when I see the piles of mats waiting for customers, I feel I should like to go out and shy them at the heads of the people.

I will not trespass further on your time, but have much pleasure in asking Mr. Stainsby to read his paper.

Mr. Gregory (National League): Mr. Chairman,—Before we proceed, I would like to say that I am anxious to move a modification in the Standing Order of the Proceedings. Will you allow me to do so?

Well, Sir, during the course of this Conference the papers have hitherto been confined to half a day; to this paper we are devoting the whole day. During the discussion on the half-day papers ten minutes per speaker only was allowed. Inasmuch as we have the whole day for this paper, I venture to suggest and move that the allowance to speakers should be fifteen minutes. (Cries of "No.") That would give

us one-third more speakers than the half-day conferences, and inasmuch as there is no paper in the afternoon, it will probably give us fifty per cent. more speakers. This is a most important subject, and such an arrangement would give those who have rather more to say than others an opportunity of expressing their views.

I will move that resolution.

MR. SIDDALL moved as an amendment that the ten minutes' time limit should stand, and that any speaker wishing to do so should be given a chance to speak again in the afternoon.

(The resolution was withdrawn.)

MR. H. J. WILSON (London): Mr. Chairman,—I have two or three very short announcements to make.

I have received a paper from Mr. Kolobovsky, who has come from Russia. It is rather long, and there is no time to read it now; but I suggest, with your permission, that it be printed as an appendix to the Report. It is about the blind in Russia. I hope this suggestion will meet with your approval.

The second announcement is with regard to the Exhibition. I hear, as is only natural, that very few are attending this, and I am going to suggest that perhaps the Chairman and Mr. Collingwood could use their influence to allow the children in the Day Schools of Exeter to pay a visit. (Applause.)

(Here the Chairman of the Education Committee arrived).

(Mr. Wilson repeated his suggestion in the following words)—

We are very glad indeed, Sir, to welcome you here to-day, and I may say I was just making a proposal. If it is possible, I cannot help thinking it might have a good effect for the children in the Day Schools of Exeter to be allowed to visit the Exhibition of work by the Blind. They would then go home and tell their parents of what they had seen.

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE: I only wish it had been proposed before. I will do what I can to see what can be arranged and report by one o'clock. (Applause.)

MR. WILSON: Now the third point is—and I am sure you will agree—that we ought to move a hearty vote of thanks for the Concert which was given last night. The arrangements were entirely in the hands of

Mr. Platt and some friends of his, and I think that they were carried through in a most admirable manner. The way in which the artistes were selected and the programme arranged were beyond all praise. I cannot help saying that a lady who sat by me said, " you could not have got a better concert in St. James's Hall." Every piece was rendered perfectly, and I think we ought to pass a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Platt and his Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: I beg to suggest that we carry that by acclamation.

(Carried).

AFTER - CARE :

And the Better and more General Employment of the Blind.

By Mr. Hy. Stainsby, f.c.t.b.,
General Secretary to the British and Foreign Blind Association.

The Conference Committee have done me the honour of asking me to prepare a Paper on "After-Care and the Better and More General Employment of the Blind." I have consulted many experts (some of thirty years' standing), and I have given close attention to this subject myself for a long, long period. I am now called upon to condense all this experience and study into a Paper of twenty minutes' duration. This I cannot do, but I will endeavour to place before you a number of bald statements unclothed with any literary effect, and I hope that they may be the means of suggesting ideas which will make the discussion of real value.

In preparing this paper I have studiously shunned traversing the ground covered by various papers written on After-Care and the Employment of the Blind, with which most of you are familiar.* I have also, as far as possible,

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*"Professions and Trades best adapted for the Blind." By Henry Stainsby. (London Conference, 1902.)

"The Problem of the Better and More General Employment of the Blind." By Colin Macdonald. (Edinburgh Conference, 1905.)

"Afterwards," a paper contributed to the Blind. By H. W. P. Pine. (January 20th, 1899.)

"After-Care." By Henry Stainsby. (Manchester and Salford Blind Aid Society's Conference, Manchester, 1906.)

avoided the invidiousness of mentioning the names of Institutions, Societies, or individuals, and have tried to deal with the subject on broad principles.

The first essential of successful and remunerative employment (whether in trades or professions) is that the training given in our Colleges and Schools shall be such that it best fits the pupil to fight the battle of life in competition with the seeing. I have indisputable evidence that in many Institutions this training is of the highest order. But proof could also be forthcoming of the inadequacy of training and of the maudlin treatment of pupils in other Institutions, the result being a condition of what I may term extreme "feebleness" on the part of the pupil, which affects him throughout life. While on the one hand there must be no lack of sympathy and kindness on the part of those responsible for the training of the blind, there must on the other hand be the example and inculcation of all those manly, enterprising, self-reliant and self-helpful qualities which go to make a good man, a good citizen, and a good workman. It also goes without saying that the teachers and their methods must be of the very best.

Anomalous as it may appear, it is true to say that "After-care" must commence long before the pupil leaves school; indeed, the whole course of training must be directed specially towards preparing the pupil to earn his own livelihood. At fourteen, or earlier, his trade or profession should be selected, and in doing this it should be borne in mind as to whether he will, when his training is completed, be employed in a workshop or start in business on his own account. In deciding for the latter, many important points should be kept in view; as—

(*a*) Capacity to carry on a business alone.

(*b*) Personal manners.

(*c*) Degree of blindness.

(*d*) Home environment; and

(*e*) Ability of home district to provide a living.

Having settled, after careful deliberation, what the pupil's calling shall be, his progress should be carefully reviewed at least twice a year by the Superintendent in consultation with his staff. If the occupation chosen is found unsuitable it should be changed, even again and again, otherwise at the end of a term of years the pupil may be found to be wholly unqualified to earn his living.

If he be destined to practice his calling at home he should, in addition to being well instructed in his particular profession or trade, receive most careful and systematic tuition in general business principles; as, buying and selling, book-keeping, correspondence, banking, and a host of other subjects, without which it is impossible to make a successful business man.

Assuming that the training has been successful, the pupil, if he has acquired a trade, should (if possible) be retained as a day worker in the Institution's trading department. *This is the best form of "After-Care."*

But it is not possible in a large number of cases to do this; as, for instance, when the Institution is unable to provide the necessary accommodation, or work, or both. Again, it may be desirable for certain reasons that the worker should reside and work at home. This last applies particularly to blind girls and women who require, in a special degree, the care and protection of their own relatives. With the home worker "After-care" is of vital importance, and without it many must sink. Comparatively few sighted persons are able to conduct a business successfully on their own account. This being so, what of the average blind man who is sole partner, sole manager, sole employee, sole book-keeper, sole traveller, sole porter, sole everything? And this is a *new* business with little or no capital. What of

inferior work due to lack of supervision? What of slack times and sickness? Looking at the question from a common-sense point of view, we are bound to confess that the blind worker is in an extremely difficult position. Here, then, arises the urgent necessity for help of the most varied kind, which we, for lack of a better term, call "After-care." In the case of the home-worker it assumes many forms, according to the peculiar circumstances of each individual. It comprises, or should comprise :—

1. The provision of a little capital. This is met—
   By putting aside a liberal proportion of the pupil's earnings during the period of apprenticeship;
   By making grants from a special fund on leaving;
   By loans bearing little or no interest, and repayable by easy instalments.
2. The gift or loan of apparatus and tools for carrying on the profession or trade acquired, and in necessitous cases an occasional grant of materials.
3. The sale of materials at strictly cost prices.
4. Arousing and keeping alive local interests.
5. Keeping in touch with the home-worker, and encouraging him to communicate his difficulties to his old School.
6. The provision of orders from the Institution during slack periods.
7. Putting finishing touches on articles made by the home worker which he cannot do himself, e.g., trimming his mats, finishing his brushes, lettering his baskets, etc., etc.
8. Advertising him on every possible occasion— in the Institution's Annual Report; on its "appeal" circulars, concert and lecture programmes, etc.; and wherever occasion presents itself, pleading with the public to patronise him.

There is a host of other ways by which the blind worker can be benefited, but the foregoing will suffice.

It should be mentioned that, in addition to Institutions assisting their own people, Gardner's Trust for the Blind makes grants for similar purposes. Last year this Trust gave £836 to 127 individuals to assist them in starting or carrying on their businesses as pianoforte tuners, basket makers, mat makers, chair caners, etc.

Institutions should as far as possible restrict the areas from which they draw their pupils; firstly, because their local blind have first claim; secondly, because every town and district ought to take its own share of care for the blind; and thirdly, because the workers, especially the home workers, will for obvious reasons reap the greatest advantage if they reside within measurable distance of the Institutions at which they were trained, and which now take a parental interest in them.

So much for the part that the Institution should play. But the blind worker must do more. His own success or failure rests mainly with him. No matter what is done for him, unless he puts forth his best efforts he cannot prosper. I have seen, as we all have, blind persons of good ability sink, through faults *entirely* their own. This is an age when enterprise, energy, and indomitable perseverance will bring their own reward.

As the first part of the title of my paper (After-care) from the very nature of things must deal largely with the home worker, so "The better and more general employment of the blind" resolves itself into employment in workshops specially established and maintained for the benefit of the trained worker.

The first question I put to my friends and co-workers was, "What is the average weekly wage of the blind workshop employee irrespective of any supplement?" The

replies I received showed a minimum of 9s. for men and 4s. for women ; and a maximum of 16s. 9d. for men and 16. 6d. for women ; the averages being 12s. for men and 9s. 6d. for women. The figures under the heads of "Professions" and "Home Pursuits" were so meagre—probably because unknown to my correspondents—as to be quite worthless. But from investigations I made seven or eight years ago, I found that the home workers' earnings were only 6s. 2d. per week.

It has always been patent to us all that the blind, by reason of their heavy handicap, will earn considerably less than the sighted, and my figures amply prove this. I now turn to the question of supplementing wages. Of the replies I received, 75 per cent. showed an attempt of some sort to supplement wages, while in the remaining 25 per cent. there was none. The whole question of augmentation, both as regards the raising of funds for this special purpose and the distribution of them, requires far more attention than it has received. Dealing with the question of funds, these can be raised only from public and private sources. As we shall see later, it is suggested that the State and Municipalities should make a capitation grant (£10 per worker), which sum should be used exclusively for augmenting the wages of the blind workers, being allocated to each according to the discretion of the governing body of the workshop. But until such grants can be claimed by law, we must use other means to raise funds for augmentation purposes. One large Institution raises by means of two collectors some £1000 to £1200 a year (or £10 per head) for this special purpose, this money being obtained mostly from sighted factory workers. The methods of distribution are varied to a degree.* Several Institutions have forwarded to me copies of their

Examples—(a) Minimum wage, sometimes as high as 20s. ; (b) Division of a lump sum among workers in proportion to wages earned ; (c) 2d. in 1s. given to the totally blind and those who are not materially helped by their sight ; (d) Supplement given only in departments where wages are exceptionally low ; (e) Dinner to each worker.

rules relating to augmentation, and three of these I have placed in the Appendix as being worthy of consideration.

Turning to the question of the number of *employable* blind persons who are actually employed, either in workshops or at home, the returns show 28 per cent. The percentage of employable persons who are engaged in workshops is 20 per cent., so that only 8 per cent. of the employable make any sort of living at home occupations—a striking fact in favour of the workshop system.

Quite a number of workshops employ all the blind workers they have trained, but this is not possible in many of the large Institutions, especially where the accommodation of their workshops bears no proportion to the output of pupils from the School. It is estimated that 200 pupils leave our training schools annually. Few have ever found their way into workshops for the sighted, and now that employers are responsible for accidents these workshops are entirely closed to the blind.

It has been pointed out that much might be done for the more general employment of the blind under existing laws, especially the Poor Laws. This is true, but these laws are *permissive* and not *compulsory*. While, therefore, on the one hand certain Boards of Guardians are most generous in the financial assistance to certain Institutions, there are other Boards who are just as niggardly. It must be evident to all that if laws are to have an all-round beneficent effect they must be compulsory.

We have then the following problems to be confronted :

(*a*) Unemployment in the case of 72 per cent. of the employable blind, and this a percentage that will rapidly grow.

(*b*) Insufficient workshop accommodation and insufficient work for these.

(*c*) Inadequate supplement in many workshops and none at all in others.

But there are other, and by no means unimportant, matters which also claim attention, *e.g.*—

(*d*) Lack of funds to meet increased deficits consequent on the extension of workshops.

(*e*) The necessity for the improvement in, and extension of, the methods of training in professions and trades, principally in connection with those persons who lose their sight too late to enter training institutions.*

(*f*) The employment of the inefficient or slow worker; and

(*g*) The difficulty of competing with factories for the sighted where every new kind of labour-saving machine is introduced, the chief aim of workshops for the blind being to *provide* labour, not to save it.

But how are these problems to be solved? In the opinion of most blind people, and those working for their benefit, the time has arrived when a law should be passed making it incumbent on County Councils and Borough Councils to provide—

(*a*) Technical training for blind persons over 16 years of age for a period not exceeding five years.

(*b*) Suitable and sufficient workshop accommodation for blind workers; and

(*c*) Capitation grants to be used exclusively for augmenting the blind workers' wages.

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*If it is possible for a blind man to live near a Training Institution, nothing would be better than that he should attend there and learn a trade. The objections to *Residential* Institutions for Adults are—(1) Few Institutions receive persons over 21; (2) Married men should not be separated from their families; (3) Very few adults would bear the restraint and discipline of Institution life, be it never so light.

Some go further, and insist that the Bill embodying the above should also include—

(*d*) A minimum wage; and

(*e*) Pensions for the infirm and incapable.

None of these clauses make provision for the actual employment in the shape of sufficient orders, it being felt that when once Public Bodies are vested with powers to deal with the items I have just given, they will use means to secure work from their own and State Departments. In my judgment, the omission of a clause for providing orders from such quarters, and at such prices as shall not involve serious loss (as is now the case with orders received from many Public Authorities) is the one weak point in the proposed legislation, although I admit that its inclusion would create serious difficulties and probably hamper the passing of a Bill.

Should "State aid" be forthcoming—which is to be devoutly hoped for—most of our serious difficulties will be met. But I am of opinion that we have not exhausted the means we now have at our command, and I therefore offer the following suggestions for your consideration, in the hope that some of them may at least have a trial—

(*a*) That Workshops purchase from each other goods which they themselves do not make, but which are produced by the blind at other workshops. Reciprocity in trading is now very largely absent, *a condition of affairs which ought to be at once and for ever rectified.* By its adoption alone, work could be found for many more blind persons *without a single additional order.*

(*b*) That workshops co-operate more than at present in the purchase of materials, carrying out of large contracts, etc.

(*c*) That trade competition between Institutions cease. I have evidence that competition of the worst kind exists, which is greatly to the discredit of those Institutions which deliberately take orders from others by cutting prices. I am informed that in one instance the guilty Institution (which employs a disproportionate number of sighted basket makers) brought down the prices of another Institution by 20 per cent., thus causing a heavy loss. I suggest that this Conference should thoroughly ventilate this matter, and let the results of their deliberations be made known to the Committees of all Workshops for the Blind. It ought to be a standing regulation that where a blind trader has secured a footing with a customer, no other blind trader should attempt to dislodge him. Institutions for the Blind ought to form one united body, instead of being, as alas they too frequently are, dissociated, competing units.

(*d*) That the common cause of the Blind be brought more prominently before the public by the publication of an up-to-date illustrated magazine for general reading, but one in which the claims of the Blind are adroitly interwoven. The magazine should sell on its merits alone, and if rightly conducted would prove a most effective lever. It could be localised, as many magazines are, and thus be used for the benefit of each and every Institution. We cannot afford to ignore the power of the press.

(*e*) The establishment of a large Central Showroom for the sale of goods made by the Blind, on the lines of the Royal Irish Industries Association in London, which has actually sold goods to the value of £189,000 since its foundation in 1888, or an average of £8,200 per annum; this sum, however, only

represents a very small fraction of the value of orders which have gone to Ireland through the ordinary channels of business, and as a result of the market created in England.

(*f*) The establishment of wholesale houses where marketable commodities can be stored and sold at wholesale prices to blind shop keepers, dealers, hawkers, etc.

(*g*) The employment of instructors of suitable home industries, whose duty should be to visit and systematically teach in their own homes, those who have never been trained in an Institution ; and

(*h*) The publication in embossed type of instruction in Home Industries similar to the series of articles on Machine Knitting and Shoemaking now appearing in an embossed magazine.

I close with a few well-meant suggestions for the efficient management of workshops—

Secure the best staff obtainable both for the office and factory.

Pay the closest attention to costing.

Spare no pains to buy in the very best markets.

Adopt the methods used in the most up-to-date factories.

Do not confine your attention to wholesale business, but foster also a retail trade, as you thereby obtain better prices ; employ more blind travellers and come into direct touch with those who can become personally interested in your work, and who will often assist it by donations, subscriptions, legacies, or otherwise.

Try to launch out in directions not traversed by others. No ingenuity is required to follow in a beaten track. Introduce new ideas and improve old methods.

Don't play at business by carrying on small, ineffective

and inefficient departments. Such are undesirable from almost every point of view.

Don't lock up money which has been left for the benefit of the blind. It may be good business, but it is bad charity. Why should the blind of the present day suffer in order to provide for the blind yet to come? If legacies are intended for endowment purposes a specific statement will be made to this effect in the wills by which they are bequeathed, and "the powers that be" will take care that they are not used otherwise.

I conclude by making a strong plea for a determined effort to give the industrious blind a fair chance to maintain themselves by their own labour. But it must be a united one, and must include the public, the workers for the blind, and the blind themselves.

RICHMOND NATIONAL INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND, DUBLIN.

SCHEME

For Supplementing the Wages of Outdoor Workers and "The Outdoor Workers Reserve Fund."

Supplementary Allowances, etc.

I. In addition to wages for work done, each outdoor worker approved by the Committee of the Institution shall be paid out of the Institution Funds, every Friday, an allowance, in accordance with the following scale, for each day he shall have been employed in the Institution during the week then ended, and for each Bank Holiday in that week. In cases of illness, a similar allowance shall be paid to each out-door worker who shall have proved his claim for

Sick Pay. (*See Par. II.*) At the same time there shall be transferred out of the Institution Funds, to the credit of the "Outdoor Workers' Reserve Fund," an additional sum of one penny per day for each outdoor worker who shall be entitled to the allowance referred to above.

SCALE OF ALLOWANCES, ETC.

Length of Service as Outdoor Worker.	Supplementary Allowance to be Paid in Cash.	Additional Amount to be Transferred to Credit of Reserve Fund
1st half-year ...	Nil	Nil ... ...
2nd half of first year	4 pence per day ...	1 penny per day
2nd year	5 ,, ,, ...	1 ,, ,,
3rd ,, ...	6 ,, ,, ...	1 ,, ,,
4th ,, ...	7 ,, ,, ...	1 ,, ,,
5th to 25th year, inclusive	8 ,, ,, ...	1 ,, ,,
26th to 35th ,, ...	9 ,, ,, ...	1 ,, ,,
36th to 40th ,, ...	10 ,, ,, ...	1 ,, ,,
41st to 45th ,, ...	11 ,, ,, ...	1 ,, ,,
46th to 50th ,, ...	One Shilling per day	1 ,, ,,

Six days only being counted in each week.

The length of service (for purposes of above allowance) of outdoor workers who resign, or, from any cause, lose their position in the Institution, and are afterwards re-admitted, shall be calculated from the date of their re-admission.

The Outdoor Workers' Reserve Fund.

II. The Outdoor Workers' Reserve Fund shall be managed by a Committee of outdoor workers, which shall be appointed annually at a General Meeting of said workers, held during the first week in May.

The By-Laws drawn up by the outdoor workers for the guidance of their Committee shall be submitted to the Committee of the Institution; and if approved and authorised by them, shall not be altered or amended afterwards without their consent.

Each outdoor worker who, in conformity with said By-Laws, shall have established his claim for "Sick Pay" shall be paid out of the Reserve Fund, for each working day sick, a sum which, added to the Supplementary Allowance, will not exceed one shilling and eightpence. Tenpence per day must be paid by, or on behalf of, the worker, to the hospital in which said worker is maintained.

N.B.—No weekly payment to any one man, of Allowance and Sick Pay combined, shall exceed ten shillings.

No Allowance or Sick Pay shall be paid to any outdoor worker who refuses to go to hospital when ordered by the Institution doctor.

Orders for Sick Pay must be issued on Fridays, and must be signed by, or on behalf of, the Secretary of the Reserve Fund Committee. Every such order shall be preserved by the Superintendent as a voucher of the payment authorized.

If the Superintendent shall at any time have reasonable ground for believing that any claim for Sick Pay is unjustified, he shall withhold payment of that claim, but must report the matter to the Committee of the Institution at its next meeting, whose decision shall be final.

III. On the pay day next following every Bank Holiday, each outdoor worker shall be paid out of the Reserve Fund

for said holiday, an allowance (in lieu of wages) which, added to the Supplementary Allowance, will amount to two shillings for that day, provided that such outdoor worker shall have been employed in the Institution during the appointed hours on every working day during the week in which the holiday has occurred.

IV. No portion of the "Outdoor Workers' Reserve Fund" shall, under any circumstances, be devoted to any other purpose than those specified in these Regulations.

V. The Trustees of the Institution will act as Treasurers of the "Outdoor Workers' Reserve Fund."

VI. If at any time the payments out of the Reserve Fund should exhaust it, the Superintendent shall deduct from the wages of each outdoor worker, and transfer same to the credit of the Reserve Fund, a sum not exceeding twopence per week, until the amount standing to the credit of the said Reserve Fund shall amount to £2.

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND.

Workers' Augmentation Fund No. 1.
(Now superseded by No. 2.)

The following Sliding Scale will be in force until further notice:—

Earnings.	Proportion of Augmentation.	Augmented amount must not exceed.
Under 10s.	33⅓ per cent.	12s. 6d.
10s. to 12s. 5d.	25 per cent.	15s. 0d.
12s. 6d. to 14s. 11d.	20 per cent.	17s. 3d.
15s. to 17s. 5d.	15 per cent.	19s. 3d.
17s. 6d. to 19s. 11d.	10 per cent.	21s. 0d.
20s. and over.	5 per cent.	

The following rules will be in force :—

(1) A minimum wage in certain cases will be allowed where inability or sickness prevents a person earning a living wage, viz.: Married men 12/6, single men 10/-, women 9/-.

(2) Every worker shall (except in case of sickness or other disability), work not less than 50 hours per week in order to participate in the Sliding Scale. For a less number of hours not more than 10 per cent. shall be allowed.

(3) In case of idleness or unsatisfactory conduct of any kind, the augmentation may be withheld.

Augmentation of Blind Workers' Wages (No. 2)

The following Rules and Regulations came into force on the 1st April, 1910 :—

(*a*) That the present system of paying a minimum wage be abolished.

(*b*) That, subject to the Draft Rules and Regulations of the Sick Club approved by this Sub-Committee being adopted, there be no payments to Blind Workers from the Augmentation Fund in consequence of sickness, as is the case under the existing scheme.

(*c*) That in future the blind workers' wages be augmented with a fixed sum per worker per week, irrespective of the amount of his or her weekly earnings, such sum to be based on the actual trade earnings for the six months ended 31st May, 1909.

(*d*) That the fixed sums referred to in (*c*) for Male Workers be as follows :—

Trade Earnings.	Mat Dept.	Basket Dept.	Brush Dept.
From 8s. to 10s.	6s.	4s. 6d.	4s.
,, 10s. 1d. to 11s.	5s. 9d.	4s. 3d.	3s. 9d.
,, 11s. 1d. to 12s.	5s. 6d.	4s.	3s. 6d.
,, 12s. 1d. to 13s.	5s. 3d.	3s. 9d.	3s. 3d.
,, 13s. 1d. to 14s.	5s.	3s. 6d.	3s.
,, 14s. 1d. to 15s.	4s. 9d.	3s. 3d.	2s. 9d.
,, 15s. 1d. to 16s.	4s. 6d.	3s.	2s. 6d.
,, 16s. 1d. to 17s.	4s. 3d.	2s. 9d.	2s. 3d.
,, 17s. 1d. to 18s.	4s.	2s. 6d.	2s.
,, 18s. 1d. to 19s.		1s. 9d.	1s. 6d.
,, 19s. 1d. to 20s.		1s.	1s.
,, 20s. 1d. to 21s.		6d.	6d.
Above 21s.		nil.	nil.

(*e*) That the fixed sums referred to in (*c*) for Female Workers be as follows :—

Trade Earnings.	Brush Dept.	Basket Dept.	Knitting Dept.
5s. to 7s.	4s.	3s.	3s.
7s. 1d. to 8s.	3s. 9d.	2s. 9d.	2s. 9d.
8s. 1d. to 9s.	3s. 6d.	2s. 6d.	2s. 6d.
9s. 1d. to 10s.	3s. 3d.	2s. 3d.	2s. 3d.

(*f*) That no change be made in the amount fixed for the Augmentation of any worker except by the Sub-Committee appointed to deal with the matter.

(*g*) That new applicants for employment must work on trial for a month, to prove that their ability qualifies them for employment. The amount of their Augmentation will be fixed by the Sub-Committee.

(*h*) That the hours of employment be as follows:— Males 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., 2.15 to 5 p.m., 5.30 to 7 p.m., and for Females 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 2.15 to 4-30 p.m., 5 to 7 p.m. All workers will be checked in and out of the workshops.

THE CHAIRMAN: I thought the paper would afford fruitful themes for discussion, and I am sure we have work before us for four or five hours at least. May I respectfully say that it will be much more pleasant for me not to have to shorten the speeches. Please condense your remarks as much as possible, and say as little as a you can. This will afford time for more speakers to address the meeting than would otherwise be the case.

Mr. Pine will open the discussion. He is not restricted to ten minutes.

MR. H. W. P. PINE, F.C.T.B. (Nottingham): Among the many subjects engaging the attention of a Conference on the Blind, there is, in my opinion, none of greater moment, none of deeper and more practical importance than that of after-care and the question of employment, and I am extremely glad that this subject has found a place in the Conference in Mr. Stainsby's thoughtful and interesting paper.

Never before was "After-care" more needed, more urgent, than at the present time. We are devoutly thankful for what has been accomplished for education under the Act of 1893, and since that for the permissive powers of Education Authorities in regard to Technical or Higher Education under the Act of 1902; but these very increased facilities have created a much greater need for "After-care" for the larger number of trained pupils who are being annually turned out from our Institutions.

This great question of "After-care and Employment" has occupied my very earnest attention for many years. As long ago as the year 1899 I had the privilege to write a paper to the "Blind," the full title of which was "Afterwards: Institutions for the Blind and their Past Pupils; a Problem and a Duty," and I then formulated a question which was described as the burning question of the time. This was five years after the Act of 1893 came into operation. Now seventeen years have elapsed, but the question may again be asked to-day, "What awaits our pupils after they have completed the period of their education? and what are to be the result and the outcome of all our training?" If I may quote from that paper:—

"I desire to submit this question most earnestly to the Managers of Blind Institutions throughout the country. In a few short years quite a small army of trained young blind workmen and women

will be pouring forth from our schools and technical workshops, ready and eager to begin the battle of life. WHAT WILL BECOME OF THEM? Hitherto English Institutions have as a rule considered that their task was over when their pupils left them. In the majority of cases little official cognizance has been taken of old pupils after they have passed from the care of our Institutions. Therein lies doubtless to a large extent the reason for the large number of failures which are unhappily to be found about the country. . . . . .

"What then must be our course? We must seek to give our young blind the very best education, both mental and physical, the very best manual training, and the very best all-round preparation for the battle of life in our power; but we must recognise that our work thus accomplished is then only *half-done*. Every Institution must realise that it is as much a part of its duty to watch over and continue in close relation with its former pupils, as it is to train them."

Sir, I venture to think those words have not lost their force to-day.

Some Institutions have, I am aware, a very good Old Pupils' Scheme, or system of "After-care," and excellent work has been done in this way for a number of years. At the Institution with which I have the honour to be connected, we have had such a scheme for eighteen years, it being established to signalise the Jubilee of the Institution in the year 1893; and it has been, and is, of untold benefit to our old pupils, who are kept in constant touch with the Institution by personal visits and by correspondence, and most of the methods of help mentioned in the paper are already being carried out.

There is one point that Mr. Stainsby has not mentioned, and this is of supreme importance. It is a very essential part of the so-called "Saxon System" on the Continent, that we also seek out and appoint someone of local influence and knowledge to act *in loco parentis*, or as a guardian to a blind person. This is usually the clergyman or other benevolent practical person of influence, frequently a lady in the case of young women.

In this connection it may be pointed out that the various Unions, which have been established during the last few years, in which the aim is to care for the blind from those of infancy to those of old age, should be invaluable, and no better or more fruitful

work could be accomplished by these Unions and their various component Societies than by setting up a systematic plan of after-care for those who have been trained at the Institutions and have gone to their homes.

Some years ago the then President of one of the oldest and the largest Institutions of the country consulted me as to what would be the most beneficial scheme that he could endeavour to carry out during his year of office. I replied that in my opinion nothing he could do would be of more importance, and would better mark his year of office, than setting on foot an Old Pupils' Scheme, and the suggestion was adopted, a scheme being established which has done good work ever since.

I should like to put it most strongly to all those responsible for the management of Institutions attending this Conference, and it would be a splendid practical result of the Conference, that they should not rest until they have set up an After-Care Department, an Old Pupils' Scheme, or what is known in England as the "Saxon System"—call it what you will—by which all pupils are looked after, and so far as is possible, permanently kept in touch with the Institution on what are now well defined and recognised lines, and which are so well set forth under the eight headings in Mr. Stainsby's paper.

The Royal Commission of 1888 recommended that all Institutions for the Blind should start a system of supervision of their past pupils, and even went so far as to suggest that it should be the duty of the Government Inspectors to ascertain and to report as to what supervision is exercised over ex-pupils—this being a regulation which might be imposed by the Education Department as a general condition of the Grant.

I am fully in agreement with Mr. Stainsby that the best system of After-care is Workshops; but as things are at present, it is not possible, neither from the exigencies of space nor of work for all who are trained, to be employed in workshops; and this is very frequently the case with blind young women. There are also musicians, teachers of music, pianoforte tuners, and others who desire to reside and work at home.

I must not anticipate, but it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that efforts which are being put forth may result in some increase being made in the accommodation and number of workshops. But some there are who have an ambition to work for

themselves, and though the difficulties in the case of a blind person are of course much greater, it is in my opinion very desirable that when possessed of the necessary energy and force of character, they should be scattered among the seeing population and work independently. It would not have satisfied the ambition and energy of some young men I know to have remained journeymen at our Institution, and who would think of a PLATER as a journeyman at the Birmingham Institution, at which I believe he was at one time a pupil?

I find myself very much in agreement with the principles laid down in Mr. Stainsby's paper, and there is really not much to criticise nor dissent from. Indeed it would be strange were it otherwise. Both Mr. Stainsby and myself have for a long period had the responsibility of management of large Institutions in the Midlands, and our joys and sorrows, our successes and disappointments have doubtless been much the same. I agree that it is an essential to success in life that the training given in our Institutions shall not only be thoroughly practical, but that it shall be intelligently directed to the pupils' after life in the world outside. There are Institutions where this view is fully recognised, but I fear that in some directions this important matter is not adequately realised. It is perfectly true that After-care—or shall we call it for this purpose, "Ante-care"?—must begin long prior to the pupil's leaving the Institution, and that his future must be kept constantly in view.

There never was a time when so much was done for the pupils in our Institutions, nor when so much solicitous kindness was shown to them. But herein lies a great danger, and this very excess of doing for them and providing for their every want or fancied necessity, and their every whim, may be their undoing, in that they are not taught to lean more upon themselves. In our excessive zeal for their comfort and welfare, we may induce coddling, and thus cause feebleness and a want of self-reliance and sturdy independence on the part of the blind. It is easy to see that all this will make the question of After-care a much more difficult problem.

The blind from their very affliction, and also from the training that in many cases they have received, are too apt to rely upon other people. Let us see to it that in addition to the ordinary education and training which we endeavour to give our pupils, we

strive by precept and practice, and by every means in our power to inculcate principles of self-help and self-reliance, and to encourage all that makes for a brave independence. The remark was once made to me, and I fear with some truth, that we teach our pupils how to do everything except how to help themselves.

The blind under training in our Institutions may be roughly divided into two classes—the competent and the incompetent, the capable and the incapable. I am aware that the causes which go to make these two great classes, lie deeper than the question of adequacy or inadequacy of training, but I am quite sure that has much to do with it. Let us therefore insist that our training shall be so thorough, so thoughtful and so practical, that it results in as many as possible being found in the former class and as few as possible in the latter.

I can conceive of nothing less likely to inculcate habits of independence and self-help, and to teach our blind to rely upon themselves, than bringing them up from say five until twenty years of age or over within the walls of an indoor Institution. The chances are entirely against it unless steps are taken as before indicated. I feel so strongly on this question that a few words may be given in description of the system we have at Nottingham, the value of which has been tested by experience. Through the exigencies of our space we began some years ago to board out our elder boys, and this system has extended since we gave up all under sixteen and all indoor residence, so that all our youths—numbering nearly forty, in ages varying from sixteen to twenty-seven—are boarded in private houses with foster mothers, near the Institution. These foster mothers provide board and lodging, good plain meals, and a separate bed for each; washing and mending; and a set weekly sum is given for each youth, the whole amount being paid in lump sum monthly. There are simple rules to keep, and the youths attend the Institution daily from 8 to 1 and 2 to 6, and in the evening for Educational and Physical Classes, particularly during the winter months. They are assembled on Sundays, morning and evening, to attend Church, and at all other times, including Saturday afternoons, they are entirely at their own disposal, and are free to go where they like. They are thus under a sort of semi-control, and have a semi-independence. They form their own companions, and go about in their own way and manage their own affairs.

They thus live ordinary lives just as other people, and this system has a very marked effect in preparing them for their future. I heartily commend this plan for dealing with youths, and it may be stated that we never have an accident of any kind, nor do we have any difficulties nor dissatisfaction. The girls are accommodated fn our own Boarding House, and as they require more supervision, it is obvious that this system would be hardly applicable to them.

We have also about twenty men, in ages ranging from twenty-four to forty-nine, who are adult pupils attending daily in our workshops and who live in independent lodgings. I see no reason why other Institutions should not do the same, and would offer this as some answer to the difficulties that Mr. Stainsby has mentioned in regard to the training of those who lose their sight in adult life.

The problem of the better and more general employment of the blind—which forms the second half of this paper—occupied the chief place at our First International Conference, in Edinburgh in 1905, and it has claimed the most careful and anxious consideration of the National Employment Committee (then appointed) ever since. As Hon. Secretary to that Committee for the past six years, I naturally feel a special interest in the question, and it is a subject on which I have made much enquiry, and to which I have devoted a great amount of time and attention.

The subject is, however, to be brought before the Conference tomorrow in the form of the Report of the Employment Committee, and I do not propose therefore to say much now. Several of the problems to be confronted, enumerated by Mr. Stainsby, are brought forward in that Report, and the methods to be adopted for dealing with them are described.

It is obvious that the blind are dependent upon the sighted for their employment. There are three sources to which we may look for this employment, and I see no others—

1st. The Government.

2nd. The Municipalities and other Public Authorities.

3rd. The public at large.

In regard to the first, aid could be given in two ways: The Government could make financial grants for the purpose of aiding and ensuring the wages of the blind workers; and the Institutions

would then be in a position to execute orders and to take contracts which they dare not do at present, because of the financial loss that would be entailed. The Government could also direct that orders for work should be placed more freely with Institutions by the State Departments, a state of things impossible now because of the heavy losses that accrue. The blind is the only organised body of the defective classes which requires exceptional treatment in this way, by the provision of work and special workshops. If this were done it would meet Mr. Stainsby's point as to the provision of employment.

In regard to the second—the Municipalities and Public Authorities as a source of employment—I am of opinion that very much more might be done in this direction. At any rate, this is a question which has recently had the consideration of the National Employment Committee, as will be shown by their Report, and they have determined to call the attention, through the Institutions, of all the public bodies in the country to this need of greater employment of the blind, and asking for their increased support on economic grounds. I feel sure that much good ought to result from this action. Whether public bodies, if vested with powers it is now sought to impose upon them, will use means to provide work, also remains to be seen. In my judgment it must tend in this direction.

I entirely agree with Mr. Stainsby about reciprocity in trading among Institutions, and that much more might be done than obtains at present in the way of co-operation in the purchase of materials by Institutions and in other ways. Perhaps no one realises more the value of this than myself from the experience in connection with the National Employment Committee, and the information one has been able to disseminate in regard to prices and places of purchase of materials.

The third and last source to which to look for employment is the public at large, and though competition is keen and foreign productions are many, it is on this that we must mainly depend. The cause of the blind has had much greater public recognition during the last ten or twenty years, but much more may be done by educating the public mind to the needs of the blind in the way of employment, by freer use of advertising, by the power of the Press, etc., and not least, the great influence which the Unions and Branch Societies must have in this direction. A great field of in-

terest will always remain for these new Unions in which to operate here. Mr. Stainsby makes suggestions also of a Magazine and of a Central Showroom, both worthy of careful consideration, though it is open to doubt whether such a Magazine could be made a financial success, and whether the expenses and the many other difficulties it is easy to foresee, would not be too great in regard to the latter suggestion.

May I express an earnest hope for some practical outcome from this valuable paper, and may I add in conclusion that what we want to establish is (as the resolution passed at the recent Annual Meeting of the Northern Union so well put it), "a wider realisation of individual responsibility for the welfare, and with it the employment, of the blind on the part of their sighted neighbours," and there would then, I believe, be no lack in that direction.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am sorry to have to curtail Mr. Pine's remarks, but as so many speakers have sent up their cards, I must do so. I am sure we are all grateful to him for his carefully prepared speech, but we have only four hours left during the morning and afternoon, and we already have sufficient speakers for four hours and a half. I hope the speakers will use some discretion.

A suggestion has been made which I think is a good one. If any persons wish merely to ask a question, kindly send the question up to the platform in writing, so that it may be asked from the chair.

MISS E. BAINBRIGGE: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I am very glad that to-day I have not any words of criticism to speak, but I want to emphasize and supplement one or two points.

I do indeed think that After-care should begin at school, and pupils should be taught how to make themselves useful at home, not taught trades only. What I have often found is that children who are taught at school have had everything made so comfortable for them that they do not care to make themselves useful at home.

I would have every boy taught how to scrub and clean the windows, and I would give prizes, if I had the management of a school, for the best scrubbed table and the best cleaned window. I knew a man of ninety who had been blind for many years, and until within a few months of his death he shaved himself and cleaned the windows for his wife. Then the girls should be taught to cook, and be also taught scrubbing, washing, sewing, and cutting-out their own clothes. Of course, teach them trades as well, but teach them these things first. I once went to

see an East End girl who had left an Institution, and found her sitting in the parlour nicely dressed; she did not expect me, but it was her habit to do a little knitting in the afternoon. She said, "Poor mother has such a hard time over the wash tub; father is dead and she keeps me." I said, "Surely you can help her?" "Oh no," she said, "You see I am blind, and cannot do anything of that kind." She had been at school until she was 20 or 21 years of age. "I hope you do something in the house," I said, "such as sweeping and dusting." "Oh no," she replied, "you see I am blind." "Well," I said, "it seems to me most extraordinary that you cannot do something to help your mother." "Ah," she replied, "if you were blind you would understand and you would be more *broad-minded*."

I think that great care ought to be taken to choose a variety of occupations, especially for the blind in country districts who cannot very well be sent away from their families—I mean chiefly for those who lose their sight after the age of 25, and are perhaps married. Often their friends send them away to a workshop—separate husband and wife. They learn some trade and come back home, where they cannot practise it. If the friends had looked about and taken more care they might have found something for them in the country—farm work for instance. I understand that in Italy blind people do a good deal of farm work, but even in Cumberland they do some. A little while ago I saw a man whose sister had a farm. He had not been used to farm work, but he lost his sight and the Home Teaching Society taught him to read, and then they suggested that he should do something else. When I saw him he had fourteen cows, all the pigs, and all the poultry in his charge; and his chief pleasure in life was when at rare intervals the Home Teacher was sent to visit him and to take him out for walks on the hills. None of his own people seemed to have time to do that.

Then there is another thing I found a man doing once with great success. He was taking round weekly papers and magazines, as well as tea, in a country district. The farm people and others were very pleased to help him by buying papers from him, and for years he had supported himself and paid a guide going round in that way.

Soap is another thing that is good. (Laughter.) One man whom I know, and who is not quite blind, takes prints and pinafores and things of that sort round the country; that is a good thing for those who are not quite blind. He goes from place to place in the Southern Counties.

Another thing is cardboard box making. I wonder if you have

heard of this as an occupation for the blind. I know a blind man who does this work. Egg-selling is another occupation; we buy our eggs from a man who sells 300 eggs a week, and he says the police are his best customers.

Now it seems to me the chief thing wanted is to establish small workshops. This need existed thirty years ago, when my father founded a workshop for the blind of Kent. His idea was that there should be small workshops for men who lose their sight, and that they should not be sent to a school for young people. He thought they should live at home and go to the workshop from day to day.

Mr. Miles Priestley (Bradford): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I should like to say how glad I am that such a high tone is sounding throughout this Conference. The Services on Sunday—the hearty Civic welcome on Monday by his Worship the Mayor—the eloquent address by Bishop Marlborough at the opening Session, and the interesting contributions of most of the subsequent speakers—mark a standard of excellence worthy of the occasion, and one which certainly indicates progress in the cause of the blind.

The paper to which we have just listened is well up to the standard; it is brimful of suggestions which, if carried into practical use, would change the whole environment of the blind of this country. The Conference Committee made a wise choice when they placed this important and far-reaching subject into the hands of Mr. Stainsby.

In this matter I have made extensive investigations, and have felt a weight of sadness as I have tried to solve one difficulty after another. Think of the fact, that since last Conference 600 young blind persons in England and Wales have left the Schools for the Blind; 600 more have become blind after school age. We may well ask, where have they gone to?

Mr. Stainsby's suggestions on Home Employment are good, but in nearly all cases that I have known home employment has failed for want of necessary supervision; the wages earned are very small, and we have passed the day when the home should be turned into a workshop. Nevertheless, to help the blind by home work is better than no work at all. Without doubt, Sir, blind persons who are capable of employment should reside sufficiently near the Institution where they might be employed, and where their difficulties could be minimised, their efforts wisely directed, and where they may have the benefits of association with their fellow-workers.

When we are told that the average wages for men employed in In-

stitutions is 12/- per week ; what *can be* the value of home work without the guiding hand ? I must confess that I am ashamed we cannot make a better statement at this Conference.

In a home where sixteen blind men reside, the cost of food, clothing, and other expenses (including rent and rates, etc.), works out at 15/- per head per week when every economy is exercised. How, then, can these men, who reside in separate homes, make ends meet on 12/- per week ? I know some such men who cannot obtain decent clothing to attend Divine Service on Sundays, and men who have incurred debts which they cannot ever repay, in providing clothing for their children. I contend that during the period of training every blind person should, by scholarship or in some other way, be fully provided for. That, after training, they should have the option of attaching themselves to some Institution or Society. The Committee should decide the place and the kind of employment, but in all cases there should be a minimum payment sufficient for the proper maintenance of those concerned. In connection with such payment there should be an incentive to self help and to make the most of the capacity they possess.

On page 31 Mr. Stainsby places the problem from A to G. These letters are very suggestive of music, but instead of a musical sound each letter is followed by a note of sadness.

We have then the following problems to be confronted :—

(*a*) Unemployment in the case of 72 per cent of the employable blind, and this percentage will rapidly grow.

(*b*) Insufficient workshop accommodation and insufficient work for the employees.

(*c*) Inadequate supplement in many workshops and none at all in others.

But there are other and by no means unimportant matters which also claim attention, *e.g.*—

(*d*) Lack of funds to meet increased deficits consequent on the extension of workshops.

(*e*) The necessity for the *improvement* in the methods of *training*, principally in connection with those who lose their sight too late to enter training Institutions.

(*f*) The employment of the inefficient or slow worker ; and

(*g*) The difficulty of competing with factories for the sighted where every new kind of labour-saving machine is introduced. The chief aim of workshops for the blind is to provide labour, not to save it.

The partially defectives form a very difficult part of this problem.

Even these would be best provided for by being attached to some Institution or Society, and should receive an adequate maintenance grant. Mr. Stainsby makes some splendid suggestions for improving the present position.

Reciprocity in trading is good. I have recently made purchases from four Institutions and sold goods to three others. When inspecting samples in connection with a large contract some time ago, I specially enquired whether some articles were supplied by Institutions for the Blind, so that unnecessary competition might be avoided. When our traveller finds out that a buyer obtains his goods from a Blind Institution, he expresses a desire to avoid competition, and endeavours to suggest something not already supplied in that way. It is sometimes almost impossible to avoid competition. When trade is quiet at one Institution, orders are worth having at a low price which would be refused at another Institution where trade is better. Orders may be taken for simple kinds of work at a low price for the employment of partially defectives, which would be of no use whatever if the workers were more skilful. Personally I do not fear competition. If a traveller from a distant place can come to Bradford and induce our neighbours to purchase his goods rather than patronise his friends, I shall offer him my congratulations. What I do *detest* is the back stairs influence which is more akin to bribery than honest competition. Mr. Stainsby's suggestions are good, and in this instance he goes one better than the "Staff Notation," and places the suggestions from A to H.

This problem will never be settled until we have some form of State assistance, especially in two points, viz.:—

1. Grants of money.
2. Orders for goods.

In Bradford we have made a serious attempt to make adequate provision for all the blind, viz.:—

1. Education for the children.
2. Technical training and maintenance scholarships from 16 to 21 years of age, and for those who become blind in later years.
3. Employment for all the employables.
4. Separate residential homes for men and women who cannot earn sufficient for their maintenance.
5. Pensions and grants for the aged and infirm who reside in their own homes.

To help us in this matter we receive about £500 per annum in grants from the City Council and the Government, and about £1000 a

year from the Guardians for the maintenance of cases in the residential homes, etc.

In addition we paid last year over £3000 in wages to the blind, including £800 for holidays and augmentations. Mr. Stainsby made a useful suggestion about retail trading. We are trying the experiment of employing semi-blind men as retail hawkers of articles made by the totally blind. Up to the present the experiment is quite a success.

If the State were responsible for the payment to the blind of a living wage, surely they would provide work, and they could easily do so.

THE CHAIRMAN: The following telegram has been received from Mr. Duke:—

"Sorry I am unable to be with you. Good wishes for success of Conference."

MR. J. P. KRUGER: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I am afraid that coming from such a far corner of the world I have not much news to tell you. I have only come to learn, so that I may take some things away to my school, and I have learnt many things of interest. I feel by coming in contact with co-workers and those who sympathise in the work, it not only inspires me to carry out the ideals which are placed before us at this Conference, but also helps me to surmount difficulties which I notice that other Institutions, and older ones than that which I represent (which is only twenty years old), experience much the same difficulties as we do in South Africa.

When our blind people come to us at first they are in most cases quite helpless, and unable to help themselves in the slightest degree; we have to teach them. Our great aim is—and I am very much strengthened in this by what I have heard at this Conference—to make them independent and to make them earn their own livelihood. I believe the blind are thankful for charity, and charity should be given to help us (I speak as one of them), but after a time it should be possible for those who possess brains and energy, together with ambition, to fight their own battles. It is a good thing that they should be in connection with Institutions, and that the Institutions should keep an eye on them and help them when they fail; but I think it would be a bad influence over many if too much were done for them, their self-reliance would diminish.

As I say, I have nothing new to tell you, but feel deeply grateful to those veteran workers in this cause for all the information they have given me to take back to South Africa, as well as for all the hints I

have been getting since I have come in contact with people who mean well to the blind, and are willing to sacrifice luxury and other things to help them.

I feel, however, that on the side of the blind there should be more recognition, and I recognise by all the applauding and cheering when men and women come to the front, who have given their lives to the cause—I recognise in that applause very much music, and I recognise in it gratitude for all that they have done for the blind.

I will not sit down without expressing my hearty thanks to Mr. Stainsby for his exhaustive paper, and for all the trouble that he must have taken in preparing it. It contains many valuable hints. I am taking the papers back with me. We have only one Institution in South Africa, but parts of the paper interest us nevertheless, and I know that when I put these things before the Union of South Africa, they will respond heartily to the suggestions which I have heard from Mr. Stainsby, and we shall be able to build up a school there; and later on when we meet in Conference again we shall be able not only to come and learn, but also to teach something ourselves.

I am sorry that I cannot make any new suggestions, but I am here for the purpose of getting information.

Mr. J. Tennant (Hon. Treas. of the Blind Massage Society, London): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I have a few remarks to make, chiefly on the question of massage. Now massage occupies in some respects a rather unique position as an employment for the blind. If we take many of the handicrafts usually practised by the blind, especially the trade of basket-making and others, it is well known that the blind man is absolutely really inferior to the seeing. I can illustrate that from my own experience. I have been for the last twenty-six years in very close touch with rather poor people in the classes of the Indigent Blind Society in London, and during that time I have known only two blind workmen who have been employed at handicrafts in shops other than those connected with Institutions for the Blind, and in both these cases the employers were blind. My own opinion is that to merely train a man in some handicraft and then leave him to himself no good is done except in very rare instances.

Then there is the profession of music, and other branches, such as tuning, where we know blind people do well; there I believe they equal the seeing.

In the case of massage, however, a blind person and a seeing person of equal capacity, given the same training, it is probable that the blind

person will be the superior. Now we began the work of the National Society of Massage in 1900, and have had something like eighty blind people to train, the larger proportion being masseuses. I have the figures here and will show them afterwards. The training given to the blind in this art is precisely the same as that given to the sighted. Dr. Fletcher Little is the one who gives the certificate, and he gives the same course and the same certificate to the blind as to the 'sighted students, so that we are guaranteed that our blind operators are equal to the seeing.

I hear that in Japan a like course of training is given. Many of you probably think, as I did, that in Japan massage is the monopoly of the blind, having been made so by law; but that is not the case. By custom and long training, however, and because of the ability they display, they do practically hold the monopoly of the Japanese market.

I can give you instances from my own experience where blind people have been very successful in the practice of massage. This is rather an exceptional case: There was a girl in the classes of the Blind Visiting Society, living on a pension from charity. Our lady Secretary took her to Bournemouth. (That is, of course, a very good residential district, which was a great point in Mr. Stainsby's paper). She was introduced to doctors, and now makes an excellent living. She has paid back all the money, is now married, and has a place for another masseuse at Bournemouth.

I am working in East London, not only in connection with the blind, but also with the Charity Organisation Society. A poor woman had broken her leg, and was attending the London Hospital for massage. It cost her a considerable sum—3/- each time she went for treatment—and I suggested to my Committee that the blind would be glad to treat her for half the fee. That was done. The first blind masseuse I sent her to refused to take payment, and wanted to work for nothing. So I got her a masseuse who did the work free of charge, and the London Hospital doctor afterwards said that he thoroughly believed in massage by the blind. I honestly believe that this work is a little gold mine for the blind. I confess that we have masseuses who are not doing well from various causes, such as bad districts, etc. We must insist more on this question of districts. You must remember that the National Society cannot make themselves responsible for these people; we look to their friends to look after them and to push them in every way.

I would like to say that the great thing we have to fight against is the unbelief of the seeing in the capability of the blind. I want to ask

the members of this Conference to spread abroad the fact that the blind are thoroughly equal to the work. It is no charity for people to employ them, for by so doing they are putting themselves in the most competent hands. We are very anxious to make that known.

We have seven blind masseuses at Smedleys, one or two employed in hospitals, one or two in infirmaries, and we have several Institution employees, but not a single one in football clubs or Turkish baths. I should like to mention, as an illustration of the unbelief of the seeing, my own want of faith with regard to the Turkish baths. It came into my head while I was there that the blind might do this work, but afterwards I came to the conclusion they could not. Just before this Conference, however, I found that a blind man was employed at the baths in Stratford. He had been well trained, and they said he was the best shampooer they had. And a gentleman told me that someone who had been to most of the Turkish baths in Europe, assured him that he had never had better treatment than from that blind man.

I am most anxious to see the blind employed at the Council Nursing Homes, and when this has been accomplished we shall have done our best.

If you would only help to spread the fact that the blind are as good as the seeing for this work, you will be doing much to assist us, and when we have planted our flag on the Nursing Home we shall have done our best.

Mr. Gregory (National League of the Blind): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I congratulate Mr. Stainsby on his paper. I do so briefly on account of the short time at my disposal, but nevertheless I am quite sincere.

There are so many points raised in the paper that it is difficult for one to select where to start, inasmuch as the limit of time will not allow a discussion of the whole.

It is very satisfactory to me to hear Mr. Stainsby declare that in the opinion of most blind people, and those working for their benefit, the time has arrived when a law should be passed making it incumbent on County and Borough Councils to provide technical training and workshop accommodation for the blind. Only a few years ago the National League of the Blind stood alone in asking this from the State. Then every man was against us—I mean every man officially connected with a Blind Institution. We nevertheless kept pegging away, and after a time we drafted a Bill, which was received among heads of Institutions, first with contempt and ridicule, later on with toleration,

later still with flattery in its most sincere form, viz., imitation; and latterly by a measure of co-operation. The result of that co-operation is not just apparent for the moment—it has, I believe, broken down—but I venture to hope that the future will see it resuscitated, and that some good will eventually come of it.

It matters not to me or to us, who is responsible for bringing the result about, we only want that result to come, and the glory may go to Mr. Pine, Mr. Stainsby, or any one else—we do not care so long as the right result is obtained.

We have worked very hard indeed as a League to influence public opinion. Every Trade Council in the country has been approached by us, as well as the Trades Union Congress, the Labour Party and bodies like that. We have worked hard to bring the subject to their notice, and have been able to convince them that the proper thing is for this to be done, and that the responsibility of the State for the blind should be recognised by the Government.

The working classes form the democracy of this country. The democracy of this country appears to me to be taking a firmer hold of the reins of Government than in the past. If we can get the democracy with us, the result will be one of immense benefit to the blind of this country. We have also been at work among the blind themselves. I think I am safe in stating that there are in the country more blind persons connected with the National League than with any other Association. We were once dubbed rabid Socialists, but I agree with the speaker who said yesterday that we do not want rabid anything. If State aid for the blind means Socialism, I think we may say of the blind and those connected with them, that we are all Socialists now.

Mr. Stainsby says that there are some who go farther than he does by advocating a minimum wage, and pensions for the infirm and incapable blind. Well, I am not ashamed to say that I am one who advocates these things. Mr. St. Clare Hill, in the course of his paper, declared (and it seemed to meet with general approval) that the blind teacher was entitled to the same remuneration for his work as a sighted teacher. I thoroughly agree with him; but I go further, and say that what is good for the goose is good for the gander, and if it is right and proper for the blind teacher to walk away with as much money as a sighted person, provided that he is as good, then surely it is equally justifiable that those devoted souls who make baskets instead of teaching children should also walk away with something like sufficient money to provide themselves with the necessaries of life.

We ask for a minimum wage, and it is not a very high one. With

regard to the male adults, we do not attempt a hard and fast line; we say that the blind male adult worker, in return for his efforts, should receive as much money as the ordinary labouring man. The wages paid to the unskilled worker in any given district should represent the wage paid to a blind person, who in return should be required to give his very best efforts.

Then with regard to pensions, I say (and I think the gentlemen on the platform will agree with me in many cases) that where a person is overtaken by blindness late in life, the combined efforts of all the gentlemen at the head of Institutions would be wasted in the attempt to teach a trade to that person. His fingers are not supple enough, his horny hands are too hard to enable him to learn to read Braille. That being so, there is nothing left for him (except his friends and his savings) but the workhouse. I do not think that the blind ought to go into the workhouse, and I feel convinced that the cost to the community of their maintenance in the workhouse, if placed in the blind men's pockets, would be sufficient for them to jog along without troubling anybody.

At present a great many Institutions—I think the majority of them —pay Trade Union wages; but I wish to say here that in my opinion the term Trade Union wages, when applied to blind people, is an absolute farce. The Trade Union rate of wages means that the piecework rates paid in workshops for seeing workers are paid to the blind—that is to say a blind man receives 5/- for a basket for which a sighted workman would be paid the same amount; but of course it is out of the power of the blind to do as much work as the sighted, and that being so, although the Trade Union wages are paid, a blind person often walks away with considerably less money than is required for him to maintain a decent existence. I met with an example just over a month ago. There was a dispute as to the price paid for a basket at a workshop in London. It was reported that a penny less than Trade Union rate was being paid. I hardly credited it, but caused enquiries to be made of the Basket Makers' Union, and found that it was so. I was very much surprised to hear this, especially as the Institution in question was the one of which Mr. St. Clare Hill is the Principal.

I will say one word with regard to competition among Institutions. I seem to remember a circumstance a few years ago, where an Institution took a Government contract for supplying a number of articles, and they took the contract at about 20 per cent. below the cost of material and wages. They got the work, of course, and the blind had the work, for which they were thankful, but had they asked 3/- more

per basket the blind would still have had the work. The result was that the basket was handed over to the Government and 3/- laid on top of it, taken out of the bag filled for the purpose of helping the blind, which meant that the Institution was subsidizing the Government instead of the Government subsidizing the blind. I think that is a stupid policy, and I hope the Institutions will act on the suggestion of Mr. Stainsby and see that there is no more cut-throat and unfair competition.

Then there is another point which I regard as very important, and which I and others have advocated for a long time, that is the purchasing by Institutions for the Blind of goods made at other similar Institutions. It is sometimes the case that an Institution is busy, but orders may come its way. I say that the proper thing is not to refuse such order, not to give it to a sighted firm, but to enquire of the other Blind Institutions whether they can possibly manage to do the work.

Then again, with regard to Poor Law Guardians. I think we may reasonably expect them to contribute towards our Institutions. What I mean is this: At Newcastle-on-Tyne about three months ago, the whole of the blind workers were to have been turned out—the Committee had failed in its endeavours to provide them with work, and the place was to be closed. The National League stepped in, however, and stepped in boldly, and decided to try and continue the management rather than the men should be turned out.

There is not the slightest doubt that these men would have been chargeable to the rates if they had been turned away from the Institution. I think we are perfectly justified, therefore, in asking the Board of Guardians, in return for our employing these people, to give us a little money from the rates to help.

It is regrettable that the percentage of unemployed blind persons is so large, and I am fully convinced, and honestly believe, that, with only the facilities which at present exist, this state of things is likely to continue. I think we are quite justified in asking both local and Imperial governing bodies to help in the establishing of workshops for the blind in convenient centres. I think it is a mistake to fetch a lad or a lass out of a village, send him or her for a term of training, and at the end of that period for him or her to go back to the village without the slightest opportunity of employment, and no chance at all of earning a livelihood. A blind person cannot go into a sighted shop. He requires special

equipment, and besides there are other obstacles in the direction of compensation. Employers now are not inclined to take persons under any disability, and that being so, I think we are justified in asking the governing bodies to help us in this matter.

I wish to say this, that a petition has been prepared by the National League of the Blind, asking the Government for State aid. You need not be afraid—there is nothing about the minimum wage, or about anything to which any of you can take exception—but this petition is to be unique in its way (for it is signed only by blind persons): it asks the Government to make provision for those blind persons who require it. We have so far about 3,500 signatures. I shall be pleased to supply a petition sheet to any member of the Conference who cares to get a few signatures. My address is—Club Union Buildings, Clerkenwell Road, London, and I shall be pleased to supply any person with a copy on application, and shall be much obliged for your co-operation and help in getting additional signatures.

Mr. W. H. Illingworth (Manchester): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—My chief purpose in coming up on to the platform this morning is to associate myself with Mr. Stainsby, Mr. Pine, and Mr. Priestley in the views they have expressed regarding this very great and very grave question. It is small wonder, since we have for so many years been associated together in this special branch of work, that our views should be somewhat similar; but it is somewhat remarkable that Mr. Pine should be giving you almost word for word the criticism or statement which I had prepared on the matter of *over* care of blind children in Institutions. I would like, however, to emphasise that part of Mr. Pine's speech.

Another point on the same lines is that care should be taken that at concerts and other public meetings in which the children take part, that the chairman and other speakers should be carefully coached beforehand so that they do not speak in exaggerated terms of the "wonderful exhibition of talent," "surpassing even what most sighted people can do." That kind of thing has a bad moral effect on the pupils, and I think if this paper does no more than cause those attending this Conference to guard against such expressions, and the over-coddling of pupils, it will have done a great deal towards reducing the amount of after-care which is necessarily created by such treatment.

The condition of many of our young blind may be likened to plants in a conservatory, and many of them have no opportunity of a hardening-off process. This brings me to the point of giving adequate assistance to pupils starting business on their own account. I refer particularly to piano tuners, who must go through a very difficult period whilst securing a connection. I feel that this warning is most important, and trust that it will receive attention.

Mr. Stainsby has not mentioned the part that the "Unions"* have played in the work of After-care. I mention this because I know there are some here who should speak on this subject. Mr. Pine asks for a "local godfather." The "Unions" should provide this.

Another important point is—and I want to emphasise this—the selection of proper homes for piano tuners, teachers, and masseuses when they leave the Institutions. It is fatal to success in many cases for them to be allowed to return to their own homes. I know a case in point of a girl being trained as a masseuse, and the Education Authority paying for that girl insist that she shall not be allowed to go home when trained, because they feel that in that case all the results of her training will be wasted. Those who are going to occupy such a position in life must be in a respectable locality, and we must be willing to expend a little money in providing for them a respectable home.

I would like to say one word with regard to Mr. Pine's lodging-out system, in the case of boys of sixteen and over. He has found it to meet with success. I have not always had the same experience. You are all aware that the sighted boy, thrown on to the world or on to the street at the age of sixteen, with no one to care for him, is in great danger. A foster-mother is not much good where the boy's will is strong. It has been found, as Mr. Pine said, an excellent system at Nottingham, however.

I would like to say a word with regard to what Mr. Gregory has stated just now. In the main I am entirely in sympathy with him, and was very glad to hear what he had to say. I am delighted that all those who are working on behalf of the blind are tending towards uniting their energies in the same direction. I think it was scarcely a question of our being absolutely opposed at the

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*The term "Union" refers to the various Unions of Agencies, Societies, and Workshops for the Blind.

outset; it was not the idea of State aid for *our technical schools and workshops* that some of us opposed, but rather the idea of a general State pension to all blind people *because they were blind*, and State workshops. State workshops mean State supervision, and I am afraid that the State regulations and red tape, which would necessarily come into the management of the workshops, would not be greatly in the interests of the blind—would not, in fact, be so beneficial to them as the present system. At the same time we *do* require a great extension of workshops. We have not got enough to accommodate all the blind who should be employed, and as voluntary aid cannot supply it, we must look to the State.

With regard to the basket maker versus the teacher, I can tell Mr. Gregory that the teacher often does not get paid so well as the artisan, and I can show cases in our workshops where blind basket makers get better pay than some of the teachers.

Sir Francis Campbell (Norwood): I do not wish to take up any time at all, and will only say that I object somewhat to what Mr. Stainsby said with regard to the age of fourteen and under. I should say thirteen. Still, that is not a question to discuss now. I will not take up the time of the Conference, as there are so many other speakers.

Mr. H. C. Preece (London): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—Although I am on the staff of the British and Foreign Blind Association, I am not in any sense a delegate of the Association here, and am speaking entirely in my private capacity.

There are one or two suggestions on which I might be able to throw some light by reason of my past experience. For twenty-two years previous to losing my sight (four years ago), I was in the India Office, which is one of the largest Government purchasing departments in this country, and I thought that perhaps I might be able to give some information that might be of assistance to the Employment Committee and others interested in the employment and the after-care of the blind, or who are engaged in the production of articles such as are bought by the Government Departments.

I would have liked to have paid attention first to some of the previous remarks, and particularly to the unanimity of those who have spoken from the platform; for, after past experience, it is certainly delightful to stand here this morning, when the Nationa

League lion is lying down side by side with the Institution lamb in the pleasant pastures of State control, and not the one inside the other as they would have been a few years ago.

I should also like to say—and it may be of interest to Miss Bainbrigge and others—that at the present time I shave myself with an open razor, and thus save the barber. I drink tea which blind agents are not uninterested in, while my two boys are now wearing excellent Norfolk suits made by a blind tailor in London. And if Miss Bainbrigge likes to extend her Saturday afternoon rambles to Southgate she will find there a blind man engaged and acting as an ostler.

I want to emphasise Mr. Stainsby's suggestion for a central show room in London or elsewhere, and I think it should be made a depot or bureau to collect information about Government contracts and those of County Councils and others. If I may say so, there has been too much de-centralization on the part of the blind workshops; their resources need to be brought together in some central place. In the India Office at the present time, owing to the large number of applications, tenders as a rule are only invited from large firms and Institutions, and if there were some central bureau or institution representing workshops for the blind, I think you would find that invitations to tender would be more freely given by the Government Departments.

And then it should be the mission of such an Institution to collect information and statistics from the chief Government Departments. I do not believe that the Institution managers know where the pattern shops of the great Government Departments are situated. There are many of them, in various parts of London, and if you had a central depot to collect the specifications, and see that the proper forms were filled in, then the contracts secured could be distributed among the various workshops according to details to be laid down by the management of the central depot.

In the first place, the Government Departments are largely ignorant of what articles are made by the blind. They know that they make a few brushes and mats, but this not enough for a Government Department like the India Office, who spend six millions on various goods annually in the interests of the country. If you could prepare an alphabetical list of all the different articles made by the blind in this country, and then a deputation were sent to the Government Departments to say that we can make all these,

and are prepared to tender, I think you would get a great many more contracts.

After all, I must speak a word for the Civil Service. I yesterday heard a man grumbling because some goods had been rejected on account of their being one thirty-second of an inch out. Gentlemen, believe me, if the Government want their goods made to one sixty-fourth of an inch, it is your duty as managers of workshops to see that they get what they require. You appear to think that the Civil Service Examiner does just as he likes, and that the King is not the only man in the country who is sometimes invested with palm oil. When a Government Official passes goods he has to stamp them with his own stamp. These goods go out, say, to India, and if any complaint is received he gets into trouble from the head of his Department. Believe me, if you will keep the work up to the highest possible standard there is little doubt but that you will get contracts.

I am certain if information and stores were centralized in London in the manner suggested by Mr. Stainsby, and proper deputations were sent round to the India Office, etc., that considerable advantages would be gained. The Chief of the Store Department is a personal friend of mine, and only the other day he told me, "I do not know what the blind manufacture; why do they not let us know all particulars." And the other day Sir Robert Hunter, whom I interviewed at the Post Office, did not know that the blind were expert stenographers. How expert they are may be guaged from the fact that we sent one ourselves to Selfridge's, where they employ forty or fifty, and the manager said that this blind girl—who was trained at the Royal Normal College and is now in the employ of the British and Foreign Blind Association—was more reliable and efficient than any girl they had on their staff.

Let me say, in conclusion, that I do hope the Employment Committee will take up the suggestion of Mr. Stainsby for a central showroom, and extend its scope, that they may move somewhat along the line I have suggested, in getting together full information about the things manufactured. Then they can send a deputation, with the right people at the head of it, and I am quite certain that if they move along those lines—if the Chiefs of Institutions insist upon the highest quality of goods being manufactured—we shall get an enormous extension of support from the

Government Departments, the Railway Companies, the County Council, and the other great business concerns of this country.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am sure we all listened with great interest to the last speaker.

MR. HERBERT ROYSTON (Blind Social Aid Society, London): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—The subject I wish to introduce is an important one at the present time. I will be as brief as I can.

At that greater Conference, meeting day by day at Westminster, generally known as the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland, there is to be hammered out the beginnings of a scheme of National Insurance against sickness and unemployment, and I want to call the attention of the Conference to the position of the blind in the working of that measure.

The Government propose that the working of the scheme shall be largely in the hands of the Friendly Societies. Now the Friendly Societies have, up to the present, believed that the blind are peculiarly liable to accidents, and possess weakly constitutions; they have consequently declined to admit them to membership. I want this Conference to make up their minds that this is not so, and also to spread the information far and wide among the Friendly Societies as to the real condition of things, and induce them to accept the blind as members, so that they may get the benefit of the new Bill.

To be brief, let us come to figures. If the Friendly Societies do not accept the blind they will have to become Post Office contributors. These contributors were described by Mr. Lloyd George as "houses on fire" and "uninsurable propositions." Is this your experience of the health of the blind? The Post Office contributor of ninepence weekly gets 10/- per week for three months, and 5/- per week for the next three months. Now let me take the case of a man belonging to a good Friendly Society: he gets 15/- per week for twelve months, 7/6 per week for three months, and 3/9 per week pension for as long as he lives. The discrepancy is enormous, and I wish to fight for the blind to be able to get this privilege. I have spoken to various people on the subject since I came to Exeter. At Southwark, Greenwich, Peckham, and Great Portland Street they tell me their average of sickness of blind and sighted is about equal. At Great Portland Street there have been two accidents—

a slight sprain to a blind man, but it was a sighted man who put his hand in the machinery.

The only definite figures I have are from Mr. Priestley, of Bradford, and these show an average sickness of eight days per annum per member; Mr. Priestley has confirmed that. According to the last Annual Report of a strong Court of Foresters in London, the average was fifteen and two-thirds; the London Sons of Temperance average about eight and a half days.

During the next few months I hope to collect more actual information, and I ask the Secretaries and heads of workshops employing the blind to send me their actual experience of sickness, comparing the sighted with the blind employees. If they have a Club, I shall be glad to have the actual figures of sickness. You have probably all got friends who are members of Friendly Societies; please ask them, "Does your Society admit blind members? and if not, why not? A friend of mine said the other day, "If you want to get good health, it seems as though you must lose your eyesight." That, of course, is an exaggeration.

The blind do not very often meet with accidents. They know the risks they run, and are always looking after themselves.

As regards sickness, I want to make some distinction. If you took the average of the blind people in the country, it might be high, but this Bill will only apply to workers employed in Institution workshops and factories, or to those working for themselves, who are able to pay sevenpence per week. Of these, both sexes can show as good an average of health as any other section of the community.

Mr. William H. Patrick (New York): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—My last instructions from the Secretary of the New York Association for the Blind were: "If you do not learn anything don't come back." I want to thank those who have taught me so much during this Convention. I stand a good chance of going back if my money lasts till the seamen's strike is ended.

The Association in New York City is largely interested in the help and employment of those who lose their sight after school age. For such there is—or rather until recently there was—no other Institution which was interested; I am glad to say, however, that there are others now. Of course we have other interests, but our special work is among the adult blind.

If I may criticise the paper this morning, I would say it said too

little about the class of men who lose their sight, as I did, at the age of forty or forty-two. Leaving out those who are educated in schools, or who are unable to work through sickness or on account of old age, we have still left untouched about 50 per cent. of the blind, and in what has been said it appears to me there has been too little elasticity. I went blind at the age of forty-two. When I had my sight I never could draw a straight line nor drive a nail straight. What would become of me if an attempt were made to teach me to make baskets? I tried it for my own amusement; I made one, but it was more like the hind leg of a dog than anything else.

The cases that come to us for education and advice are various, and the treatment must be varied. A man came to us who had been a pastor. He went through two colleges and became pastor of a church. That man needed education to enable him to go on and become a far more successful parson than before. Another man came who had been a farm labourer; in a workshop his health would suffer; he must be enabled to work on a vegetable farm. Another man had never done anything since going blind. I remember in one case finding a man who had been four years in one room; he had no trousers and was wearing a woman's skirt. That man had to be taken from that room after we had dressed him, and he had to be taught how to walk. He was taken into the workshop, but of course he earned nothing; he had a little money, and somebody paid for him to be taught. He is now making about four dollars a week; this of course is not enough, but it more than doubles the earnings of his little sister, who had been slaving her heart out to keep him.

I could go on with instances like this, but I want time to refer to our most serious difficulty—that is the education of what one of my friends calls "the blind sighted public." I thoroughly agree with what Mr. Stainsby said as to the fact that we must use the Press as a means of advertising ourselves. Undoubtedly we must; we must use advertisements of every kind, and if we can (to use another Americanism), we must "pull the leg" of the reporters and get a sensational article. We must use every influence we possibly can. It has been said in New York that we cannot place a blind worker without influence; that is true, but we must use all the pull we can and all the push we can to get our friends to employ the blind.

We have recently made a strong attempt to bring the work of the blind before the public. Through the suggestions made in

New York, Joseph H. Choate called together an influential Committee, and that Committee raised some funds and started an exhibition called The Blind Workers Exhibition. We hired the Metropolitan Opera House, and collected over a hundred workers from different parts of the United States. Nearly every Institution took part. Besides the hundred workers, there were others who gave demonstrations of physical culture, and there were also blind musicians. The exhibition was opened by President Taft, who paid a high tribute to the advancement made in all parts of the United States in work for the blind.

As a result, we are having enquiries on all sides to find out definitely what can be done. To give an example: at that exhibition I met a gentleman who is the head of a large department in one of the biggest department stores in New York. I introduced him to a blind stenographer, but at first he was afraid to dictate a letter, so I dictated one, and after he had seen what could be done, he promised to take a blind stenographer. Now that work is going on, but I believe that the blind themselves can do the most to popularise their own employment in various kinds of business. It is the blind themselves who must show a marked independence, who must do work of the highest standard. If they are stenographers they must do, as I know a young lady did recently—take down a speech with only one error.

The blind must stand on their dignity, and show themselves men; they should mix with sighted people and place themselves on a level with them. Ladies and Gentlemen, if anyone asks you to dinner you should go. If you want to find a good example of a man who accepted every invitation to dinner, read your New Testament—you will find that Christ never refused. Stand on your rights as men and women; don't be put down because you are blind. And more than all, don't let the public see any difference between you and the seeing people. I want to emphasise the fact that every blind man and woman, regardless of whether they can earn sufficient to support themselves, should work. I know that it is impossible for many of us to support ourselves entirely; but if we cannot do that, at least let us show that we are able and willing to do something towards it.

This is what a well-known poet had to say on that subject—

Though darkness covers all, Our work we must not shirk;
O Thou, great Light of Lights, Give light through work.

Sir Francis Campbell (Norwood): Some one referred yesterday to the point of getting over difficulties, etc. When I went to be insured some years ago in Boston, I was told they could not insure the blind. I said, "Let the Chairman come and speak to me." He would not come. Then I said, "Well, shall I go and speak to him?" I did so, and said, "If you will come with me into the street, where there is a most dangerous corner, I think I can convince you." When I got to the crossing I held up my hand, and a policeman came up to me. I told him I wanted to get across. He stopped all the traffic and took me across; then the Chairman came running up to me and said "Shake hands; I did not know you could get about so well. If you want an insurance for £10,000 instead of £1,000 you can have it."

Mr. C. M. Collingwood (Exeter): I am asked to remind delegates and members that the nominations for the Executive Committee must close at 5 o'clock this afternoon. If you desire to nominate anyone, kindly see to it before that time.

I am also asked to emphasise the necessity for attendance to-morrow afternoon for the election of Sub-Committees. Many of the members who are unable to take part in the informal discussion on Friday evening, desire to discuss three or four important points before leaving; consequently, there will be a meeting at 5.30 this evening to discuss four very important subjects. It is strenuous work—2.30 to 5, and 5.30 to 7, but it is the desire of the delegates themselves. The subjects are as follows:—

The formation of a National Examination Board to secure one standard of efficiency for piano tuners.

Collaboration among printing houses.

The State Insurance Bill as it affects the blind.

Debating Societies for the blind.

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON.

CHAIRMAN : Mr. S. C. Snow.

THE CHAIRMAN: Herr Reusch, of Darmstadt, Germany, will open the discussion this afternoon.

HERR REUSCH: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I ask in advance that you will have patience with me, and therefore thank you.

I will do my best to bring my thoughts into your language, which I like so much, and I will try to make myself understood. But I like not only your language—I must say on this occasion that I like your courage and your optimism. Last year when I went home I said to my countrymen that I had been told in this country that the Germans are pessimists, and I replied "quite right"; then we can work together —given a little hope and a little pessimism and it ought to bring about the right mixture. And so I think you will have nothing against me. I have been asked to say something about the after-care of the blind in Germany, and I do so with the greatest pleasure. I should like first to express my thanks to Mr. Stainsby for the thorough and very comprehensive paper we have heard this morning.

In Germany there are two systems of after-care of the blind—the Saxon System (which has already been alluded to this morning), and the Prussian System. The latter you can call the Kiele System, which takes its name from the town of Kiel, where was founded the first Home for the Blind, and the Director read a paper on it at the Congress in Amsterdam. I always call it the Prussian System. It provides homes and factories for the blind. Till a few years ago in Saxony these were not known; but I should like to emphasise the fact that these two systems are not opposed to one another—they are working more and more together.

So far as the after-care of the blind is concerned, without the help of any special Union, no German Institution comprises such an extensive field of work as the Institution in Dresden. It was there formerly, but is now in Chemnitz, Saxony. This Institution has a fund for after-care, commenced in 1893 through the £7 legacy of a poor washer-

woman, which fund has now reached the sum of £100,000, bearing over £3,250 per annum interest. The Institution is therefore in a position to give to each of the 500 old boys, with whom they are in communication, the yearly sum of £5 per head. That means that some get nothing and others get more than that amount, but that is the average. The begging blind receive nothing from the fund. Blind street organ grinders are amenable to the law; the blind who intermarry must forego their benefits. The blind are scattered about, and the majority are visited periodically. Material is supplied to them through the Institutions, and goods are sold for them which they are unable to sell for themselves. For those who are too old to work there is an asylum in Saxony.

The Prussian System, as already mentioned, works by factories and homes. Of those homes, we have now in Germany 22 for women and about 12 for men. The people who live in these homes earn a living by their work, paying for board and lodging, and in time they are generally able to save a little. The scale of wages is arranged in various ways. Every boarder has lodgings at from £2 10s. to £3 12s. per annum, and pays for full board about 9d. per day. Those who cannot go into the world to earn a living, or those living in a place which is unsuitable for their business, come into the homes and stay there. No one is compelled to enter or to leave. Liberty is allowed as far as possible. Where it is suitable a room is shared, but many have rooms entirely private, which the women keep in order themselves, having flowers and singing birds to brighten them.

In some of these homes the inmates prepare their meals themselves, taking their dinner only with the others; or in some cases they live entirely outside. When able to work, and their earnings do not produce sufficient to cover the expenses, then the After-care Society covers the deficit, so that the weak do not suffer. In that way the weak have an opportnnity to do as much as they can, whereas if they were living at home with their families they could not do so well.

The importance of after-care and employment in the workshops for the blind will be seen from the amount paid in wages in Germany. In round figures this amounts to £6,500 in a year paid to 500 workers, or about £13 per head. These have not all been able to work full time, or the amount paid would have been much more. Some of the workers did not work at all; others worked only part of the year; the wages therefore varied from about £5 to £15.

Of the After-care Unions, of which there are six in Prussia, the one founded in 1868 shows the quickest growth, having 347 districts, and in

round figures 24,000 members, who pay a minimum subscription of 1/- yearly. These subscriptions produce the sum of £15,000 including interest.

I do not wish to leave unmentioned what a great advantage and blessing has been brought to the blind of Germany by the State Sick and Invalid Insurance, which you are now trying to get in England. We have had this since 1889. Blind men who, through sickness or old age, have become unable to work, receive yearly pensions from the State. The amount of the pension varies according to the amount of the contributions; it may be as much as £15 a year. Of course this is a considerable help in the struggle for existence.

We have practically the same employments for the adult blind as you have in England. Perhaps we do more in rope-making, but on the other hand we do not do any shoe-making, but I hope this latter trade will be introduced into Germany shortly.

The best paid employment for the blind is without doubt the piano tuning. In Germany there are about 260 blind tuners at work; 160 of these work in factories, and their wages vary from 13/- to 16/- per week. There are 30 or 40 blind organists, many of whom are also piano tuners and music teachers. The salary of an organist runs from £15 to £100 a year.

I think you will be surprised when I say that I have come to the end of my remarks, because I had not time to prepare more, and these are the most important facts I was able to present to you about After-care in Germany.

Capt. Purson Webber (Kineton, Warwickshire): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—The few remarks I have to make in regard to Mr. Stainsby's able paper are those impressions I have received from the various criticisms that we have heard.

One thing that stands out quite alone is this: that there are certain points which seem to have developed during the past twelve years, and in nearly every instance these points have been made by speakers who happen to be blind. I hope therefore that when Committees are formed this sort of thing may be taken into consideration.

Now the first speaker, who alluded lightly to the fact that it would help us greatly if the sighted were more educated to our needs, was a sighted person; he was the gentlemen who spoke on the subject of massage. Among the general public—though not of course so much as among specialists—there is a false impression as to what our needs are. It so often happens that the most easy things are looked upon as

wonderful, while other things are really difficult and yet look easy, and this fact hampers us greatly. Now if there were a society for teaching the sighted, where these things could be explained in a straightforward way, it would be seen at once. Here is an ordinary instance: How kind people are in opening a gate for us, yet we all know that if we are told that the handle is on the right or the left, as the case may be, we know much better where we are. If you go through a gate that has been opened you lose a landmark, and it puts you off; it is a small matter, but just one of those little things that make all the difference between help and hindrance.

There is another thing I would like to bring forward again, and that is, I am often asked questions in the walk of life I have taken up (poultry-keeping), whether it is a specially good line for the blind. My answer is that every man should tackle what he is best fitted for. What a man wants is something to do—it is the awful feeling of having nothing to do that is bad; when you have found out what to do, do it. There are difficulties to overcome in most things, but I think if the blind are really interested in any particular subject they will get over those difficulties. It will generally be found that they are not so difficult as they at first appear. There is such a thing as application and adaptation, and as years go on it becomes easier, till we arrive at such a point that we do not notice the difficulties. Some people say we cannot compete with sighted labour. Yes we can to a certain extent—that is the spirit to approach blind labour with; it is very difficult for the sighted to appreciate this, but it is so. Let us have ten per cent. blind on every Committee that is formed for the benefit of the blind.

Miss Beatrice Taylor: I wish to speak for a moment on a subject which, though it may not be fully realised, touches very nearly the work of After-care, for in dealing with the work in which I have for many years been engaged among the blind children, and which it seems to me is near akin to a cabinet-sized Saxon System, spoken of to-day by Mr. Pine. I can claim to stand on a small bridge, one end of which rests on our schools and their teachers, and the other end rests on whatever goes to form the firm foundations of After-care. This gives me an opportunity I am determined not to miss.

The word I would say is from a point of view hardly yet spoken of —the children's point of view—as they grow through the schools, and receive the kind words of encouragement and help from their teachers; stretching after them (sometimes with difficulty), after they leave the schools at the age of sixteen.

This brings me to something there may be no other opportunity to touch on, about our teachers in the day and residential schools for the blind.

I speak simply as one who comes in contact with these teachers (in many blind schools scattered over Great Britain from Aberdeen to Southsea), as dear kind human beings who love to do their *very best* for the children they have in their charge.

The testimony I bear is almost beyond my power to express in words. It is the knowledge from personal experience that you have amongst you a magnificent body of men and women who give, not only what they are paid to give, but also what cannot be bought by money, a large percentage of their very selves to forward the interests and make happy the lives of the children under their care.

I need hardly explain, as a "dealer" in "Sunbeams." how I came to find this out, and will only add that had it not been for the co-operation of a large number of these teachers up and down our land, at least 500 or 600 of the very poorest of the blind children of Great Britain—who are now in possession of Sunbeam friends, who write to them month by month in Braille, show them kindnesses too many and varied to touch on, and take a very real interest in their lives, likely to reach far beyond the limit of the bridge before mentioned—these, friends, without your dear good teachers could never have been put into contact with the children at all.

My opinion of the teachers was well expressed by a writer to one of the London daily newspapers, who sent a long account of the visit of those thousands of children to the Crystal Palace the other day, at the end of which, in a paragraph about three lines in length, he said, "And of those teachers whose patience, unfailing good temper, and admirable management, made the success of a marvellous day, I should like to write a column in their praise.

There is a question I should like to have answered. Is it assured that every child who leaves school has a pencil and paper—in other words a Braille frame? If not, there are Braille frames to be had from my "Little Bridge" by any children on the Sunbeam List, who apply through their teachers, for this year at any rate—free to those who really cannot pay, and half-price to those who cannot pay all.

It has been made possible for me to say this in consequence of a bequest which has generously been made to the Sunbeam Mission, and which it is my desire to spend in the wisest possible way on those who pass over "the Bridge" up to the age of 17.

I am further enabled to say, for the first time in consequence of this

bequest, that (at any rate for a limited time), cases in real need, a year or two over our age limit of 17, will also be helped with discretion in other ways.

Mr. A. C. Barnes (Bristol): Mr. Chairman and Friends,—I really believe that to-day is the beginning of the real Conference, for it seems to me at any rate that up to the present date the subjects have more or less been treated, shall I say, from an academic point of view. This is the first occasion I have attended a Conference of this character. But the opening paper this morning, and the speakers who followed the opener, really seemed to express human desire to be of practical help; and there seemed to me to be more humanity in the speeches that have been given to-day than all those that have been given during the first part of the week.

Now, coming to the paper that the friend of the blind has given, there are one or two points on which I should like to say a word or two. First of all, it has been stated that a petition has been drawn up, signed by 3,300 persons, for the express purpose of calling on the Government to do something in the direction of State intervention. That in itself is sufficient, to an ordinary intelligent person at least, to cause them to sit down and make enquiries, seeing that it comes from a body of men and women afflicted with blindness to the number of 3,300.

Now with regard to Institutions. Take the period between the blind pupils leaving the Education Authorities up to the time when they leave the Institution. I know several cases which, during that period of apprenticeship conceived the idea, "Well, after all, if I learn a trade, if I learn to make articles, what opportunity shall I have to dispose of them? There is no room for me in the Institution; probably if I go out and work at home, I shall have some difficulty in getting work to do." Some cases I know have left with a good strong hope, and a desire to get on in life, and after making the attempt for months, or perhaps for a few years, there is a sort of feeling that after all these years of seclusion in an Institution, and the expense of their training, all has been to no purpose with regard to enabling a man or woman to get their living; and a feeling comes over that blind person—what I would term a sort of mental and physical inertia—and they say, "I do not care in what way I try to get my living, so long as I can do something better than this precarious position that I am in." That explains to a great extent why you have tuners, good musicians, basket makers, and workers in other trades, who are selling matches and laces in the

streets. That is my opinion with regard to the blind who have been through an apprenticeship and have been termed "failures."

And now with regard to those who meet with their affliction late in life. Up to the present, as far as I can remember, nothing has been suggested for making sufficient provision for these. I should say that by all means it is best to invite or encourage all those thought able, to learn something in a workshop rather than let them drift into a workhouse, or on the street selling matches and laces. By all means encourage them to come into a workshop, but do not let them be dependent upon their production. Only give them their earnings, or a slight supplement. I know plenty of cases in Bristol, in the streets, who would be willing and anxious to get in from the rain and cold if any public authority would give them even 12/- a week, which is not much for a man to desire. It is not much of an ambition.

Then one or two speakers have raised points which I would have liked to bring out, especially the one before the previous speaker, in reference to having blind representation on these Committees. It is obvious that the charity system has almost utterly failed. Some say they cannot get work, others say they cannot get funds. Is it not that we should come together and say, "There is something lacking in the system; we cannot get rid of the goods, nor get funds to supplement the wages; then we must go to the most competent we have to cope with this evil, and that is the State." That is what the National League wants: to educate the public to the responsibility they ought to feel for their more unfortunate brothers and sisters.

It is hoped that the Committees will try and break down those prejudices, and invite blind representatives to come among them—especially those who have been through Institutions, and know what the life is, and also those who have worked in a workshop—not a blind man who has lost his sight between 30 and 40 years of age, and has had only home teaching to do. We want men and women who have been through the mill to be on these Committees.

Mr. C. W. Harris (Newport, Mon.): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I don't wish to detain you unnecessarily long in repeating anything that has already been said. This is a subject upon which I think all the blind representatives of this Conference ought to have their say, whether it is to the hindrance of the Conference in general or not; I think they should make their voice heard. Because it is, as the last speaker said, we are those who have really had the experience of having passed through the mill. This is a subject which Mr. Stainsby

dealt with very nicely in a two-fold manner, and I was pleased to observe that his first point with regard to the after-care of the blind, commenced as it were with the treatment of the pupil inside the Institution. That is a very important point, because there you have the opportunity of training and fitting the boy or girl for the business life which he or she has to follow; upon the training of the boys and girls in the Institutions, depends to a very large extent the success which they will meet with in after life. I have had a little experience myself in this direction, because having learnt a trade at a large Institution where a great number of blind people are trained for various trades, I have gone through the mill, I know what it is to be in an Institution, and I know what it is to come back to the world after leaving the Institution. It was always manifest to me when I was in the Institution, though I was quite raw then in things concerning the Blind world, that there was considerable lack of training in business matters in that Institution at that time. I hope that the speakers who are at the heads of Institutions will pay much greater attention to this matter in the future.

There was one thing also that I noticed in the addresses of some of the speakers, and that was the reference to conducting these Institutions in such a way that they should not be too luxurious and comfortable there. I should like to add a word of warning on the opposite side. Be careful that you do not make the Institutions untenable for the Blind. I say this, because I am afraid that in the past something of that sort has happened, and has caused the blind to leave the Institutions before they were thoroughly trained.

Now then my own point is this—Mr. Stainsby in his paper recommended a great deal, and I believe that nearly all that he has recommended is thoroughly practicable, and would be a great help to the blind. I have come here as the representative of the Newport and Monmouth Blind Aid Society, and since I have been here listening to these discussions I have become more proud of the Society that I represent than I have ever been before, for this reason—we have put into practical existence the very thing that you are so strongly advocating here: for the past three years we have had various meetings throughout the County of Monmouth and have gathered a number of blind persons together, nearly all of whom live in the County, and have gone from one town to another, and have had the blind people actually at work there showing the public what they can do; and we have had them working from month to month in between times, and have taken a quantity of their work from town to town and sold the

goods at those exhibitions and sales. Thus you see we have had a threefold object in holding the meetings—that is, to provide the blind worker with a source for disposing of his goods after he has made them. That is one of the greatest difficulties that the blind have to contend with—they often cannot dispose of their goods after supplying a certain area.

So you see we have been the means of enabling a large number of blind persons to dispose of their goods in such a way as they could never have hoped to do without our aid. And then we have had, as it were, a number of musicians belonging to our part, and have given a concert. We have allowed the people in free of charge in order that they might come and see and hear what the blind could do; and when we have got them there we have not lost the opportunity to push it home, to drive it into them, as to their duty of supporting the blind in their particular district.

So you see we have had this work actually in hand, and I would urge upon the Blind Aid Societies, through their representatives who are present, to take up this work and put a little personal enthusiasm into it. Take a personal interest in the blind, and help them by solicitation among your friends. Help the blind out of their difficulties, because this is one of the difficulties which presses them most urgently —their inability to obtain work for themselves. Let them have the orders and they can execute them. But my experience, and the experience of others, is that there is very great difficulty in obtaining that work. Now, if you ladies and gentlemen would go among your friends more and more, and solicit orders for the blind, and hand them over, then you would be doing the blind a great service.

I do not want to come down without mentioning one or two particular things. One of them is the improvement that is now being made in mechanical appliances for the blind, and I think in this direction the blind should have great hopes of being able to execute their work, and possibly find new spheres of labour, by the aid of mechanical devices. One of the men in our County, who has been only recently trained in some handicraft, has applied his mind to the invention of one or two things which I think will prove of benefit; and I speak in particular of his more recent invention—that of a machine or device to make mat-making much easier and much quicker than it could ever be done before on the ordinary frame. If there are any representatives of any Society, or any individuals present who would care to have further particulars about this, I shall be very pleased to supply information to them.

Mr. A. B. Norwood (York): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I should like to add my quota of appreciation to that of the other speakers, with regard to Mr. Stainsby's paper. I think we shall all agree that he has presented this difficult and important subject, about which so much has been written, in a manner that shows he has given it much thought. I will take the paper back with me, and try to adopt at our School in York, as far as possible, those things which he suggests and which we have not already adopted.

In the matter of providing employment, we have heard a great deal about looking directly to the State and the Municipalities. I would rather urge that we should look to obtain this help rather by a wider realisation of individual responsibility for the welfare of the blind. If we can get a larger number of people all round, who realise their responsibility for the welfare of the blind, we shall soon be able to leaven the Municipalities and then the State, and we shall get what we want without losing the personal interest which the blind of every district require at the hands of their neighbours.

As a practical contribution to this question of employment, and this is my main reason for standing here, I would ask your consideration of the question of domestic employment for those of our blind girls who have a considerable degree of vision.

Mr. Munby (the Hon. Secretary of our School)—who asked me to say with what regret it is that he has been unable to attend this Conference, owing to legal engagements—rather astonished the public lately at our Annual Meeting, by telling them of our experience in this matter; and I should like to say that within the last three months we have obtained situations for no less than four girls who have some amount of sight, but who have yet been trained at our School as blind people. I think that there is great scope for the activities of such girls in this way. It will also help those who are totally blind, for it will relieve the latter from the competition of those who have some degree of sight. At the end of March our first girl went for a month's trial at a country vicarage. She had been trained at the School in the simpler forms of domestic work. At the end of the month we had an extremely good report of her, and she has now been engaged as an assistant in the vicarage household. Since then we have found similar situations for two other girls. Mind, I do not recommend this for every girl, but there are many who are quite suitable and capable of being trained for such work. We all know that the domestic question is a very acute one, and when ladies of households find out how thoroughly reliable these girls are in their work, they will not hesitate to employ them.

There is (or there was), however, one difficulty in employing these girls in domestic service, and that is the question of insurance against accident. But this has been taken up and is well on the way to a satisfactory settlement. The first attempt to effect such an insurance was made with a London office, but without success. A second application elicited the reply that they would take her for an annual premium of £5. This was, of course, prohibitive and quite unreasonable. The Yorkshire Insurance Company was then approached. This Company has had considerable experience through insuring the adult workers of our Institutions under the Employers' Liability and Workmen's Compensation Acts, and they are aware that there has not been a claim made upon them for any accident due to blindness. When this was pointed out to them, they agreed to insure our first girl in domestic service for an annual premium of 10/- We are hoping to get this premium reduced to that paid for a sighted domestic servant, for I am convinced that there is no more risk attached to the employment of such girls as I have mentioned than to ordinary sighted domestic servants.

I sincerely hope that this question of domestic employment for such of our girls as have a useful amount of sight, and are in other ways suitable, will be widely taken up, for the experience I have just now related show it to be both feasible and advantageous.

Rev. S. F. Harris (Cotleigh): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—After-care implies previous care. This word, put at the forefront of Mr. Stainsby's paper, seems to show for what people he is trying to find employment; but I think he has left out of consideration a very large number, in fact, one-half of the blind. We have it on good authority that half the blind become blind after school age, and I think it is a case not only of after-care, but of first-care.

Those who are struck blind by accident or disease are, I think, those who need more consideration than anyone. They want employment found for them at once; it is very often the saving of their brains and sometimes of their lives.

I am hoping this afternoon to learn what one can say when people come to us and say, "So-and-so is blind; can you suggest anything that he can do?" I have come here to learn of something to say to those in that condition, so that they may be helped. I remember a very forcible illustration of this. I am very glad to see Dr. Moon here, for it was something he said three years ago which made an impression on my mind. A medical student was in preparation for his career, and was struck with blindness. He was in despair. I think he was

contemplating an attempt on his life, and happily a suggestion was made which has resulted in something that one of our speakers spoke of this morning. Someone suggested massage; he tried it, and became a most successful masseur. This saved his life, and he now makes a good income, and is a comfort to many. That is the kind of thing we want to find for those who are on the verge of despair. Only last week someone came to me from Miss Bainbrigge to ask about some work for a man living about thirty miles from here. I suggested something, and he was delighted with the idea. If it does not bring him in a very great profit, at any rate it is an idea which will create an interest in his life, and will save him from being unhappy.

I wonder whether anything could be done in the way of a Labour Bureau for the Blind. I do not mean a central one, but a series of very limited and local bureaux where people could find out what there is for the blind to do.

Another thing I believe to be quite possible. We have visitors in the County Council for milk, etc. Why should we not have someone appointed as a visitor to give some hints to the blind about the employment they may take up? I am sure that idea might be worked out. It would be an expense, of course; everything is that is worth doing; but I believe that a very little would stand between the freshly blind and despair, and I am sure you will agree that we ought to do anything we can just to do that. It does not matter about the money or the effort necessary; the object is worthy, and we will try to do what we can. I may say I was much struck last night, in going through the Exhibition. I picked up a pamphlet about the work in Bradford, and I find that they are trying to meet every need for employment, and they have a third class for those who become blind after school age. They have a separate establishment for them, and I believe there is not a single person in Bradford who is blind and has no employment.

What they can do there can be done here. Why can we not suggest some way by which those becoming blind in later life may have employment? If this can be done, no matter what it costs, it will be worth doing.

Herr Englerth (Germany): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—Before I come to the point which I want to speak about, I must join my dear friend, Herr Reusch, of Germany, in congratulating Mr. Stainsby on his splendid paper. And I may say here that I consider it one of the most valuable that has yet been read.

I want to come to one point which I have been told would be of

interest for you to know, and so I made up my mind to tell you about it. Mr. Stainsby, in one part of his paper, said something about unfair competition. I mean to say he spoke to the effect that it often happens that the managers of blind workshops keep down the price of labour by unfair competition. There is in Germany a law which is supposed to prevent this, but it is often very difficult to prove what is unfair competition and what is not. I have been told that this law is to be amplified to take in the work of the blind, and as I think there is no such law in England, I thought it might interest you to hear of it. I hope that this law will be, as is proposed, for the benefit of the blind, and that you will also have something of the kind in England, to protect the honest blind worker from being cut down in price.

Rev. St. Clare Hill: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I have two points that I should like to refer to. The first is that I believe I am correct in saying that in all the Conferences which have been held in the last twenty years, the subject which has claimed our attention this afternoon has been considered; and there is, it seems to me, a remarkable differenee between the previous Conferences on this subject and this afternoon's meeting.

There is in the discussion to-day that which appears to me to be exceedingly hopeful—a greater spirit of co-operation. We are all interested in attaining the end of securing employment for the people in whom we are interested; but it has so often been shown that we are by no means agreed as to the methods. One of the striking features of to-day's discussion, I think, is that we seem to have come very much to the same conclusion. And I think that was never more clearly shown than by the two excellent speeches of Mr. Gregory and the gentleman who last spoke—Mr. Barnes. At one time we seemed to be so very far apart. Ladies and Gentlemen, I for one feel at all events that we have made a big step towards co-operation, and I hope by the explanation of one or two little differences of opinion all the defects will be cleared away, and we shall work in the same way towards gaining the same ends.

The other point on which I should like to say a word (and I have been commissioned to do so by the National Employment Committee, and with the special permission of the Chairman, our friend Mr. Wilson) and that is to say that the National Employment Committee have during the last six years been thoroughly impressed with the magnitude and importance of this subject. They have gone very deeply into the various problems, and they claim that they are beginning to under-

stand the means by which some of the problems at all events may be solved. Mr. Pine this morning had not the opportunity of referring to one particular point in connection with the National Employment Committee, and that is that the Municipal Authorities have been approached by the National Employment Committee, with results that are satisfactory as far as they go, and certainly are hopeful for other arrangements being made in future. But the National Employment Committee feel that the work is colossal. It is so big, and the problems surrounding it are so great, that it will take a very long time to clear all the difficulties away by which the employment of the blind will be made an easier matter than at present. But I am sure every one is impressed by the fact that we must go on persisting until we obtain that success that I am sure is worthy of the great object we have before us. We are going to make our blind far more happy if we can put good work into their hands. I believe we are going to give them more happiness by that than by doling out money to them.

One of the most important things said to me as the Principal of a School is, "Oh that I could get a place where I could work at my trade." And the most distressing thing to me is to give a young man a certificate saying he is capable of practising a trade, to pin to him a badge in honour of his good character, and take him to the front door and say, "Good-bye, my friend; I am sorry that there is no place for you here." It is horrible. And if we can only discover some means by which we may co-operate together—especially we who are in London —to see that such a young man as I have described is sent to a workshop where he will earn a living, it will be a grand work done.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I believe one of the great boons we place in the hands of our blind people is the capability of earning; the next (and perhaps it is greater than the first) is the possibility of using that capability so as to become an independent member of society, respected by himself and every individual he meets.

Mr. Stott (Edinburgh): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen, —The subject before us in Mr. Stainsby's paper I regard as the crux of the whole situation. The papers which we have had under consideration with regard to teachers—that is secular teachers and teachers of music—merge, I submit, into the paper now before us for discussion, inasmuch as the whole question is summed up in the employment of the able blind.

Now, before going far down Mr. Stainsby's paper, we find that it refers to successful and remunerative employment. A wiser man than I has said (and I am not going to contradict him) that in all labour

there is profit. I venture to submit to you, Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen, that in much of the labour of the blind there is particularly little if any profit, and in connection with much of it there is considerable loss. Now what we are here for is to find ways and means for obviating all this, and to bring into prominence such sources of employment and such industries as will profitably employ the blind and give to them a source from which they can expect to derive reasonable remuneration for the energies they expend.

Then, coming a little further down Mr. Stainsby's paper, he proposes certain things that I am afraid are somewhat impracticable. In paragraph four he proposes a course regarding pupils, but I should like to ask him by whom is the judgment to be made as to the occupation for which a pupil is to be trained—by the pupil himself, or by those under whose care the pupil is placed? Now I venture to tell you, my friends, that in this connection one often finds that a square man is placed in a round hole, and vice versa, and by and by the position becomes uncomfortable. Another old writer has said that a man's gift makes room for him, and I think those under whose charge the blind are placed will find, if they observe the mental and physical capabilities of those whom they would train, that they would by and by be able to direct the individual as to the course he ought to pursue. In this connection a certain gentleman already referred to is really a phenomenal case; I refer to Mr. Plater. But I have at present in my mind some seven or eight men, capable workmen in a shop, who could make good work and earn a decent day's wages. They thought they would like to commence business for themselves. They were assisted to do so, and in every case resulted in complete failure. I want to emphasise the fact that you cannot mark out certain lines for certain individuals. Each individual will find lines for himself as his capabilities come to the front, and a man with energy will not be restrained by the bands of an Institution for the Blind; he will go forward and find a place for himself in the world.

Now we have had before us a good deal about the training of the youth, but our clerical friend brought to your notice that a very large proportion of the blind have lost their sight after reaching adult life. Now this class forms by far the largest proportion of those whom we have knocking at the doors of our Institutions. What is to become of them? What is being done for them? Efforts are being put forth here and there throughout the country by Institutions for the Blind, but they have to acknowledge their incapability, inadequacy, insufficiency, to provide for those men a means of livelihood. What is to be done?

It has been suggested that an enormous bureau should be established, where we could put all the goods that are produced by the blind. It is a proposition the success of which I question very much, even if Mr. Stainsby has thought it out to its extreme limits.

Furthermore, it has been suggested that materials might be bought from a central bureau. In this you are only multiplying what the blind themselves object to. You are finding situations for capable sighted people, for few blind persons could inspect the materials and deal with the business. You are creating appointments, I am sure, for some able sighted men who will be glad to take those appointments, and to receive adequate remuneration for their services. But let us turn again to the question of a central bureau. We have this place, and we find that certain materials are required at a distance. There is a little part I think Mr. Stainsby has forgotten—indeed two little parts—one goes under the name of Ireland and the other under the name of Scotland—(to which England has often been indebted). Now supposing that we in Edinburgh want some little thing; we have to apply to London and get it transferred. That means that money is wasted in carriage, and the difficulties that might arise are so numerous and so bad that I need not waste time in enlarging on them now.

Then I should like to call attention briefly to what our friend Mr. Gregory said. I thought it was very important. He stated that if a man got the allowance that would keep him in the poorhouse he would go away satisfied. I am sure Mr. Gregory is mistaken. At any rate the poor people in Scotland, when they have the misfortune to get into the workhouse, cost, I think, only about five or six shillings per week for their maintenance there, and I do not think that Mr. Gregory would would be content with that. The sum I have referred to includes the official expenditure. He wants something larger than that.

It appears to me, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, that the answer to the question is this—that except some action is taken and a demand made on the Government to accept the responsibility, nothing satisfactory can be done. Once get the Government to accept the responsibility and the blind are bound to get work, because the Government would certainly provide work rather than dole out money indefinitely. Work and money are the two factors which seem to me to be the answer to the question. Work in the first instance, money in the second.

Dr. Washington Ranger (London): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—My first word must be to acknowledge with very sincere

gratitude the ability and the excellence of Mr. Stainsby's paper; but—and Mr. Stainsby will be the first to admit this—I think there are points and gaps in it which afford an opportunity for me to make a few observations with regard to it.

We have heard a great deal this morning and this afternoon about the help that Government might give or ought to give, and what the Municipalities, Companies, Societies, etc., could do for the blind. But I want to speak of what the blind can do for themselves. I want to look at the problem for a moment from the point of view of the blind man. Take the blind man qualified for some profession or business. He has left the Institution, or Home, or other place where he may have received his training, and is ready to make a start in life. What ought to be his first care? Partnership with the sighted I believe to be the absolute solution of nine-tenths of his difficulties. As a matter of fact I have not heard one speech to-day that would be inconsistent with this in any way. A blind man—what does he start with? He has lost his sight, and you must remember that is a pure deduction from his capacities, and he has absolutely nothing in place of it; blindness confers on a man nothing, absolutely nothing. Away with the folly of a sixth sense and nonsense of that kind. I say let us pass from the region of sentiment and theory down to hard facts, and let us treat the blind man from the standpoint that he has lost something, but has still an abundance of faculties left to him, and it is worthy of any philanthropist to help him to bring those faculties to the best market.

Now in my judgment the best way for a blind man to do—and I speak as a blind worker, for I do not admit that I have worked less hard than any of the hardest workers, and I know something of what I am saying—I say that if he knows his position at all his first duty to himself is to look for someone who has the quality he has not got—that of sight. Let him take an average being of his own age, who possesses ordinary capacities; let him find such a man, and let him arrange for them to work together. As a matter of fact, that arrangement is not entirely for the benefit of the blind man—it is very largely for the benefit of the seeing man too, who frequently cannot find a market for his capacities and labours, and is wandering up and down the country looking for something to do. If he finds an intelligent partner they ought to be able to make a jolly good living, or they are not worthy of the name of men. I have never known a single instance of a blind man working in partnership with a sighted one and making a failure of it, for over thirty years. There is one subsidiary principle which I ought to point out: a blind man always has to give a disproportionate amount

of labour to that which a sighted man has to give for the same results, and that must be part of the recognised elements of the partnership. There is one other thing, and this I would like particularly to impress upon my blind brethren and sisters: that the responsibility of his efforts relatively to his blind brothers and sisters is infinitely larger than the corresponding responsibility of a sighted man for his work to his fellow sighted man.

Many and many a blind man and woman, by failure which need not have been, has closed the door (as Miss Bell so happily put it yesterday) to their sisters and brothers who are also blind. The responsibility, therefore, rests with every blind man to do his very best, and produce the maximum of perfection of which his faculties will admit, joined with a sighted man. I say his responsibility for that is very great.

Now I would like to pass to a second point in Mr. Stainsby's paper. One of his suggestions is that there should be provided a central place where a blind man can get rid of his goods. That is a very practical suggestion, but it is one that is doomed to failure unless the blind worker produces absolutely the best work that can be produced; his work should be of the very highest standard. I know of no source from which you can get better information than Miss Douglas Hamilton's work, "Eyes for the Blind." What she has done for women in providing a market for their productions, and raising them in every way, is quite remarkable, and I think demonstrates absolutely the necessity which Mr. Stainsby lays down for a central depot where goods can be disposed of.

Now one other point, and only one other, and that is about the attitude of sighted people to the blind. The good old Book says, "You shall not put a stumbling block in the way of the blind." And on this, as on all other subjects, the instruction we get from that source is sound and incontrovertible. Yet I submit to you that the sighted are continually and persistently putting stumbling blocks in the way by their wilful ignorance with regard to the blind, as to what they can do and what they cannot do, and as to their ambitions, purposes, intentions, etc. The sighted do not, for the most part (though there are, of course, exceptions), understand the blind, and by their persistent negligence they throw stumbling blocks in our way which is a discredit to the sighted and unfair to the blind. They sometimes assume things about us which are absolutely untrue. In one case they go and credit us with doing things which it is quite impossible for us to do, and on the other hand they will not give us credit for being able to do that which is perhaps somewhat difficult

to do, but which by persistence and industry a blind man can acquire the power of doing.

Mr. W. H. Thurman (Birmingham): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—In the first place I should like to congratulate Mr. Stainsby on his excellent paper, for I consider that his fountain of knowledge in work for the blind has been displayed this morning by a spray worth infinitely more than its sparkle.

In Birmingham we run on much the same lines as those which Mr. Stainsby has indicated. On the first page of his paper reference is made in the last paragraph to the advisability of superintendents consulting periodically with the heads of departments in regard to the progress made by the blind pupils, and also as to what occupation they should follow. That suggestion has been in existence for some years at the Birmingham Institution, and I am bound to say with most satisfactory results. Not many weeks ago—or rather not many months ago—the case of a girl was considered during one of these periodical examinations, and enquiries were made into her progress. It was thought she was somewhat mentally defective, but it was decided to give her another trial of six months before coming to a definite conclusion. I am delighted to say that at the end of the six months she had made very great progress, and is continuing to do so. I venture to say that speaks abundantly for the system which Mr. Stainsby advocates. With regard to Mr. Stott's question as to who should decide the future of the pupil, that is a simple matter, but I leave Mr. Stainsby to answer that question.

I am a great believer in reciprocity in regard to work for the blind, and hope we shall hear more about this. Already we at Birmingham trade very considerably with other Institutions.

As to Sick Clubs, I think you will be interested to know that the Sick Club in connection with the Birmingham Institution is working very well, although only twelve months old, and we have not considered what Mr. Lloyd George is about to do. For every twopence or threepence paid into the Club by a blind man or woman, a like amount is added to it by the Committee of the Institution. The workers who pay twopence per week receive sick benefit of 8/- a week for three months, then 4/- for three months; the threepenny members get 12/- a week for three months, and half that amount for a further three months. This will, I think, compare favourably with most Sick Clubs, and I am of opinion that Mr. Lloyd George's scheme will not affect us adversely to any considerable extent.

A Voice: You will get another twopence.

Mr. Thurmrn: That may be so, but I have not yet gone into the matter carefully.

As to Braille frames referred to by Miss Taylor, these are supplied to pupils when they leave the Birmingham Institution.

In regard to money being locked up which has come to the Institution by way of legacies, my Committee believe in spending them as reasonably as may be, and thus confer immediate benefit on the blind. I think you will like to hear that only a couple of months ago we had a magnificent legacy, although the amount was very small: it was the sum of £5 bequeathed to the Institution by an old and valued member of our Adult Blind Branch, in recognition of the services rendered by the Adult Blind Teacher in visiting and reading to her week by week.

In regard to the question of augmentation, I rather wish more stress had been laid upon this point, for I was anxious to gain information from experts assembled here. Our system of augmentation was revised some little time ago, and before the new scheme came into operation I was told (in fact it was while I was preparing it) that it "bristled with difficulties," and "we should never get a satisfactory solution." I may say that time has proved these statements to be incorrect, and that the augmentation scheme now in force, particulars of which are appended to Mr. Stainsby's paper, is working admirably, This system of augmenting the wages of the blind I recommend most strongly to all Institutions where some scheme of the kind does not already exist. The money for the purpose is collected from workpeople and employers of labour, and I hope that the managers of Institutions, where augmentation does not exist, will go back and immediately appoint canvassers for the purpose. If I can be of any assistance in the matter I shall be only too pleased. Last year we collected no less than £1,400, and every penny of this was given to the blind workers. My Committee believe in paying the salaries and expenses of the canvassers (both of whom are blind) out of the general funds of the Institution.

Mr. Illingworth touched upon a very important point when he referred to the inadvisability of eulogizing the work of the pupils in their presence. We have in Birmingham a system of lectures, concerts, and gymnastic entertainments, and at one time it was customary to give the lectures in the presence of the pupils. When I first took up office I made a great mistake; I soon found out that I was patting the pupils on the back too much, so I altered the system, and arranged that before I began my lecture the pupils should go to bed.

Mr. Gregory surely does not mean to imply that a basket maker should have the same pay as an efficient blind teacher? I think he advocated that in the course of his remarks, but surely he cannot mean it?

With regard to lectures on the work for the blind, I think this is a splendid means of educating public opinion. Last Winter I went to two theatres on a Sunday evening, and to several public halls on other evenings, and altogether during the Winter months 9,000 persons heard my lecture on the work of the blind. I think to a very great extent these lectures have assisted in the very considerable increase that is noticeable in our trading returns.

One word to the Lancashire and Yorkshire representatives. Quite recently we introduced clog-making into the Birmingham Institution workshops, as a branch of our boot-making department, and I can assure you that it pays. I have already had an order for 2,000 pairs, and a promise of a further order for 4,000 pairs. The partially sighted can do this work quite well, as we have proved over and over again. We have also recently gone very closely into the work of our knitting department, and find there is a good market, which might be extended, in stocking-making on a large scale. Typewriting, I consider, ought to be taught to all children in our schools who are capable of receiving such instruction, so that they may communicate with their friends when the latter cannot read Braille.

In conclusion, I would like to refer to the section of Mr. Stainsby's paper where he recommends that the Committee of Workshops should be approached on the matter of reciprocity, and I do hope that a resolution will be passed to that effect this afternoon.

Dr. R. C. Moon.—Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Stainsby's paper for its direct, lucid statements and its practical remarks upon the question of employment of the blind, is beyond all praise.

Home teaching of reading to the blind has provided employment for very many, some of whom have received their general training in Schools, and others have been chosen from those who have been sought out and taught by other home teachers.

In each case they have been selected because they appeared to possess the requisite special ability, tact and enthusiasm for imparting knowledge to those with whom they come in contact in ordinary homes. Home teaching of reading is not referred to in the paper before us, but Mr. Stainsby recommends "the employ-

ment of instructors of suitable home industries, whose duty should be to visit and *systematically* teach in their own homes, those who have never been trained in an Institution."

It is very interesting to observe the developments that have followed the introduction of reading to the blind in their homes. The "Pennsylvannia Home Teaching Society and Free Circulating Library for the Blind," does not attempt to teach handicrafts, which, in order to be profitable must be patiently and systematically taught, as the Managers have no desire to trench upon the province of other organisations in the City, which, to a certain extent, deal with the employment of the blind. In Philadelphia there is a Working Home for Blind Men and a Working Home for Blind Women, as well as the splendid "Overbrook Institution" for the general instruction of the younger blind. The latter Institution has recently enlarged the scope of its beneficent operations by establishing a much needed salesroom and exchange in the heart of the city. Other extensions of industrial plans for the adult blind, will doubtless in time emanate from the Institutions referred to. Notwithstanding that the "Pennsylvania Home Teaching Society, and Free Circulating Library for the Blind," is of a purely literary character and makes no pretentions to teaching handicrafts, its teachers giving instruction in crocheting, bead work and knitting to their pupils. They also take a personal interest in promoting their material welfare in many ways, assisting and advising them as to various ways in which they may gain a livelihood.

Home teaching of the blind has in many places come to mean, in America and the British Isles, more than what was originally comprised in the teaching of reading and writing and the loaning of embossed books to the blind. In many instances the teaching of some employment has been added; but it is evident that as a result of the Home Teaching Work there is a tendency in many places to supplement it by starting *workshops* where those who desire to become *proficient* in handicrafts can learn to do so in a *proper* way with the necessary models, apparatus, and supervision. It is too much to expect that a home teacher of reading, with a large territory to cover, can also properly teach remunerative, profitable trades so that the learners may be fitted to produce articles which will compete in price and quality with those of the sighted, skilled workman.

There can be no objection to handicrafts being taught in homes

provided all the proper apparatus, models and materials can be carried to the homes, and sufficient time be devoted to teaching trades systematically and thoroughly in order that the pupil may become a proficient workman ; but I know, for instance, of a home teacher who is supposed to go over one of the smaller States in America once a month, and, in addition to reading and writing, she has to teach several kinds of handicraft, including chair-caning and basket-making. If the teacher gives a lesson to her pupil to-day, it will be a month before she will be able to give him another lesson, and I am informed that three months at least are required, even in a shop, for the learning of chair-caning perfectly.

Mr. Stainsby has referred to "playing at business" as objectionable, and I cannot but feel that for the blind to play at employment is equally objectionable. If they are to learn trades, let them learn them thoroughly in well-equipped workshops.

The home teaching of the blind by the blind is no mean occupation, and in the States is fairly well remunerated. The salaries paid in America range from £94 to £120 per annum, in addition to the payment of 2/- a day for a guide if needed, and also the travelling expenses of both. It must, however, be remembered that expenses are higher in the States than in this country.

As we have so recently been discussing the question of a National Library for the Blind of this country, it will doubtless be of interest to this Conference to know that by the last mail from America I have received a clipping from the newspapers which bears upon the subject as regards America. With your kind permission I will read it :

"Miss Giffin, who has had charge of the "Blind Room" in the Congressional Library in Washington for so many years, will, it is said, be put at the head of the National Library for the Blind, which is soon to be established at the National capital. This National Library as planned will manufacture books for the blind, with which circulating libraries will be supplied. These books will be recent publications, so that the blind will be able to keep in touch with current literature."

Miss Sadgrove (North of England Union) : I would like to say, as regards After-care, the North of England Union has adopted the plan of all Superintendents notifying me when their pupils leave school; and then I write either to the Secretary of the Visiting Society or someone who is interested in the blind where they live, in order

that they may have, as it has been said, "a God parent," who will try to look after them in every way, and especially bring the work to them, which they have been trained to do, as far as possible. We do feel that this question is one of the most important points in the Union's work.

Miss Merivale (Midland Union) asks me to say for her:

"We are trying, by slow degrees, to establish a system of 'Visitors' for the blind in every parish, to whom may be notified, through the Central Secretary, any pupil being returned to his own home. Bucks has thirty visitors, Warwick fifteen visitors."

I might say we also are now doing this.

Father Ryan: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I regret that it is my lot to be confined to a few minutes. It is not possible that I could crush into that space of time the many thoughts that I would like to express to this Conference.

There are one or two things in Mr. Stainsby's paper to which I should like to refer. He says: "The first essential for successful and remunerative employment is that the training given in our Colleges and Schools shall be such as best fits the pupil to fight the battle of life in competition with the seeing." Everyone who has ever spent five minutes in considering the situation of the sightless would come to that conclusion. Nevertheless it is reiterated over and over again, but little else is done beyond this reiteration. All the speeches that I have heard here during the last few days, either expressly or impliedly stated that there is nothing for the blind but some laborious or mechanical art, or music. Now I do not believe that. I miss from all the speeches of all those who have addressed us any reference to something more and something better than such interesting platitudes, that sound very fine but leave things as they were. They remind one of what the Devil said when shearing the goat—"It is all noise and no wool."

I am thoroughly convinced that there are several careers open to the blind which they have not yet attempted, because of this shearing business, which leaves them unfitted for other than laborious and unremunerative work.

Again, Mr. Stainsby says, "If the blind man be destined to work at home he should, in addition to being well instructed in his profession or trade, receive most careful and systematic tuition in general business principles, such as buying and selling, book-keeping, and correspondence." Ladies and Gentlemen, I have a great

deal to say on this matter of account-keeping, but only five minutes having been allowed me, it is absolutely impossible for me to do more than merely indicate the general import, and leave you to guess my meaning. But if you will come to the Hall this evening at eight o'clock I shall be more explicit.

The blind person is excluded from commercial life primarily because he cannot write except with a special instrument, and because he cannot calculate except with a special instrument. You may not like to hear it, but it is true; he is not provided up to this hour with the means of writing or calculating without an instrument. Now no merchant wants a person in his office using an instrument, which, if it should be lost or mislaid, his business might become chaotic. There is a means of enabling the blind to write and to calculate with perfect accuracy and ease, and without any instrument whatever; but I must defer telling you all about it until to-night, for my time is now up.

Mr. Frew Bryden (Glasgow): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—My time is limited, so I will state briefly what I have to say.

Mr. Stainsby in his paper draws attention to the fact that 72 per cent. of the blind are unemployed. The main fact thus brought before us is that only a fraction of the blind are being dealt with in the way of employment. I want to think of the 72 per cent. who are unemployed. One point I would like to notice is that there is a difference between the state of matters in England and the state existing in Scotland in regard to this after-care. It arises from the fact that in connection with the English Institutions they mainly train only, and then send the blind out to do as best they can, and the consequence is that hundreds are floating about unemployed. In Scotland they act a little differently. The Institutions take the blind people in for training, and keep them after they are trained, and usually they all get employment. But both in England and Scotland there is the same ultimate result. In England they are drifting because no after-employment is provided for them, and in Scotland because there is no room in the Institutions where training and employment are provided. I could supply to-morrow, in the West of Scotland, the names of eighty persons who are suitable to be trained in these Institutions, but cannot get in because there is no room.

But there is a large proportion of persons who lose their sight after they are forty years of age, and these constitute a very big part of the problem. There has not been a word uttered in regard to what can be done for them. Now I want to make a remark or two. In dealing with these, I do not know of a single workshop that will take them in. As there is no workshop employment to be had for them, the question must be faced as best it may. For many years we in Scotland have tried along the lines of individualism with these, and I could give you case after case where, recognising the individuality of these people, we have sought to guide them where they could use the knowledge they possess in the way of doing some form of trading or other employment. I could point to various cases, but I will give one only. About three years ago, a gentleman, who was the manager of a large engineering place, lost his sight and his situation. What did he do? We equipped him with a knowledge of Braille, etc. He got a partner and started business in a commercial way, supplying the requirements of engineering firms, and with his knowledge and the help of his sighted partner, he is doing well. Now I think that it ought to be kept in mind more than it is, that even the blind basket-maker needs sighted help, and I can point to many who turned out failures because they were quite alone; if they had been in partnership with a sighted man they might have done good business.

Let me say broadly that we should all bear in mind (particularly the new Unions) that there are openings, other than workshops, which we can take advantage of. Let us not think that because there is no employment in workshops there is nothing for them to do. Many of them have the trading faculty, which can be stimulated and developed if we who have the responsibility for their welfare will provide them with the opportunity.

Miss Petty: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—There is one point in Mr. Stainsby's paper that struck me very forcibly. I had no idea of the enormous percentage of the blind who are unemployed. I must say I was horrified to hear Mr. Stainsby's figures in this connection.

How long will those people remain employable if they are unemployed? I have a good deal to do with boys who have been through the schools, and go away to try to find work; they may get a job occasionally, but every now and then they lose heart. Now we know with sighted men that the more they are out of employment the more unemployable they become, and we must not blame the blind if they become

unemployable when they leave school, and have no opportunity of finding work. I have often thought that those first two or three years after leaving school are the most trying in the lives of blind persons, and I should like the heads of Institutions to come forward and see whether they could not make some special arrangements for those boys, to guarantee them a certain amount of work, however little—something that they could depend upon, to give them heart to go on.

We have several girls who left us after they had learned knitting. The After-care Committee purchased machines for them, and they started on their own account. We then tried to get friends to buy socks and stockings from these girls, but we could not keep it up. The girls became unskilled. So we have formed now a small Association. It employs five or six girls; we try to obtain orders for them, and we make orders if we have not got them. We get the After-care Committee to find the capital so that we may keep the girls on. We get rid of the stock by sales of work largely. They earn four or five shillings a week, and some of the better ones make eight or ten shillings.

Some of the partially blind we have been successful in placing out. One or two boys have obtained positions with sighted basket makers. One boy has done well as a nursery gardener, and we have another partially blind boy on a farm, who is doing well.

We have placed several of our girls in service, and they have done well. Certainly some have had two or three places before settling down; one girl had three places, but is now doing very well in the third. Where there has been a difficulty in regard to the insurance, the After-care Committee have offered to pay the difference on the policies between the insurance of a blind and a normal person.

Mr. Guy Campbell (Norwood): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I seldom disagree with Mr. Stainsby, but I do not like his remark that Institutions should as far as possible restrict the areas from which they draw their pupils, "firstly because their local blind have first claim, and secondly because every town and district ought to take its own share of care for the blind." And yet at the end of his paper Mr. Stainsby says, "Don't play at business by carrying on small, ineffective departments."

Now what I want to say is that if you restrict your area you are adding still more to the limitations of the blind. Seeing people are given an elementary education and are then sent, if seeking to become musicians, to conservatoires—not in their own town, but the best that

they can go to. They get their minds broadened, and they get a better opportunity of acquiring efficiency in their art; this must improve the woman's or man's chance of employment.

What I want to point out is this: what harm is there, if a certain Institution can turn out the best possible form of brush-making, in sending to that Institution a man or woman who has received elementary training elsewhere, if it is thought necessary for him or for her to become a brush-maker? The same thing applies if one Institution does weaving better than another. I should like to warn you that if this restriction is insisted upon and is carried out, you are going to hamper the future employment of the blind.

MR. THOMAS H. MARTIN (Swiss Cottage): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I will only take up your time for a few minutes. Almost all the points raised in Mr. Stainsby's valuable paper have been treated by speakers who know more about them than I do, and therefore I have not much to say. I feel, however, that I should not do justice to my Committee if I did not say a word on the subjeut of reciprocity. Our Institution has a small sales shop, and I may say it has for years been half filled with the products of four or five other Blind Institutions. We are open to take articles from practically any Blind Institution, and to try to sell them.

With regard to after-care, as Mr. Norwood said, I shall try to get my Committee to carry out the suggestions of Mr. Stainsby, some of which, I may say, we already carry out.

I would like to draw attention to the last paragraph on page 28, about pupils' progress. We are met with a difficulty in this; we have only three occupations to select from, and I would like to know how to deal with a case found unsuitable for either of these?

Another point is this: after we have trained our girls and sent them out, mostly to home industries such as machine knitting, the difficulty at once arises of getting work for them. Would it be in the province of the Unions to allow one of their officers to go round and endeavour to get work for them?

One word about the central department that has been suggested. As far as London goes, such a central showroom would be a great boon, and better still would be a central buying department where we could get our materials first hand instead of paying such a heavy price as we have to do when buying from the middleman.

Mr. McAloney (Pittsburg, U.S.A.): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I must express my appreciation of the admirable paper contributed by Mr. Stainsby, and of the splendid discussions thereon. I sincerely hope that the practical suggestions made by Mr. Stainsby and the others will be carefully considered and adopted.

About two weeks ago, in Pennsylvania, the National Convention of Workers for the Blind took place at Overbrook. There were over 300 delegates, the majority of whom were blind. Problems such as you are discussing were discussed there, and I can assure you that the workers there are watching this Conference with interest. I received this morning a copy of some resolutions adopted by the Overbrook Convention; a number of them bear directly on the subject before this Conference to-day, and as I know your interest in the blind of other countries, I will, with your permission, read them to you:

1. That the American Association of Workers for the Blind desires to record its appreciation of the remarkable development of the movement for prevention of blindness, which, as a result of medical and lay efforts, has recently resulted in the national organisation of the American Association for the Conservation of Vision; and
2. That we heartily endorse the plan presented by Dr. E. Park Lewis, President of the American Association for Conservation of Vision, that a day be set apart to be called Conservation of Vision Day and observed in a way to bring this subject to the minds of the people throughout the entire country.
3. That we commend the work of the National Committee on Prison Labour in relation to the disastrous competition between prison and blind labour in many of our States, and urge that they extend the sphere of their activities; and to this end we commend their Committee for the suggestion, and hereby request the Governors' Conference at its next annual meeting to appoint a Commission similar to the United States Industrial Commission of 1900, to investigate the prisons and prison systems of the several States, bearing upon the competition arising from the present methods of selling prison product upon the open market and the goods manufactured by the dependent blind, and to organise a programme of education and legislation which will protect the rights and serve the needs of all parties concerned, viz., the prisoner and his family; the administration of the prisons; the tax payer; the consumer; the manufacturer; the dependent blind worker—together with all other free working men. Be it further resolved, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the National Committee on Prison

Labour, to the Secretaries of all State Associations of workers for the blind, and to the Hon. William George Jordon, Secretary of the Governors' Conference.

4. That we record once more our thorough appreciation of the action of the Massachusetts and Pittsburg Associations for the Blind in giving their support to the "Outlook for the Blind," a quarterly magazine which continuously and increasingly serves as a strong factor in co-ordinating and extending work for the blind in this country.

5. Whereas the United States census, in its efforts to secure all data possible in regard to the blind, has sent to each blind person in the United States a blank containing a list of questions seeking this information, and whereas the securing of this information is of the utmost importance to the cause of the blind, it is

   Resolved, that this Asociation urges the blind to answer these questions and send them to the Census Department at Washington, and that if any blind have not received such blank, that they send at once to the Census Department for them.

6. That we commend the tendency of the Institutions for the education of blind youth to continue their efforts along the lines of higher education, and to broaden their curricula to meet the needs of those pupils who show no ability to follow successfully a higher literary or musical career.

7. That the Chairman be requested to appoint a Committee of three to study the question of employment of the blind alongside the seeing, with a view to pooling information from various States; encouraging further studies on a uniform plan; and making report and recommendations to the next Conference.

8. That the Chairman be requested to appoint a Committee of three to study the question of special training for field workers, with a view to report with recommendations at the next Conference.

9. That whereas this Association recognises the great need of suitable provision, not only for the dependent, the aged, and the infirm blind, but for homeless and unprotected blind women, we recommend that a Committee of three be appointed by the chair to gather and collate information on these subjects from various States and report with recommendations to the next Conference.

10. Resolved, that the A.A.W.B. shall establish a bureau through which information shall be obtained to aid *all* blind workers in purchasing materials and supplies in the most economical way.

American Association of Workers for the Blind,
June 23rd, 1911,
Robert B. Irwin, Chairman,
S. D. Lucas,
Lucy Wright, *Committee.*

Also that pupils who have completed the musical course in the Schools for the Blind shall have had at least one year's experience in teaching sighted pupils under the supervision of the school.

Mr. William Harris (Eastbourne): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—So many have put their names down to address this meeting that I should not have done so, but I thought it my duty to take some part in the work, though it must be a very humble part. It seems to me that the Conference is held so that we may all express our opinion; we are not simply to be listeners, but by our words are to endeavour to encourage others. We do not come here to get all we can, but to give something also.

With regard to the industrial occupations, the title of the paper ("After-care") is an acknowledgment that the blind need help after they leave school, and I would ask you to realise that at school and after school are two different things. How is it that the blind do not succeed after they leave school? Let us see for a moment. At school they are well fed, well clothed, and well exercised, and also if they are poorly they have a doctor, and if necessary a nurse, and are well cared for in every way. They leave school, often go to very poor homes, and have none of these advantages. Is it wonderful that they fail? That their health gives way? What can you expect? Having lost their health, their vital power never being very good, they are almost helpless.

It is the fashion to praise the blind, and flatter them so much that it would seem that it was an advantage to be blind. We talk of what they can do, and what they have done—but that is only a blind person, not *the blind*. As I pointed out yesterday, we must not think of "the blind" as a body being the same as "a blind person" thoroughly gifted and with special opportunities to get on well. The others are left behind.

With regard to occupations, I do not think they can get a livelihood in their own homes. Certainly the workshop system is the best. Workshops are clean and healthy; their work is properly supervised, material is provided for them, and the very exercise of going to work and back like other people is an advantage. They ought to have com-

panionship, and associate as much as possible with people who can see, but they are at a disadvantage. The well-to-do blind suffer as much as the poorer ones from want of occupation.

Rev. G. F. Whittleton (Plumstead): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—When I sent up my card this morning I had no idea that there would be so many speakers, and that so much would be said. Most of the speech I thought of making has been delivered by those who have already spoken, but I thought I would like to make rather a protest from my point of view.

We have heard over and over again the voice of the Institutions loud in the land. We have been hearing what we have done, instead of what remains to be done. We are told that 72 per cent. of the blind people cannot be kept in the Institutions; that they have been turned out, and are selling laces, singing, and doing things of that kind—material going to waste for which money has been spent, and to which labour and thought have been devoted, all going on the scrap heap simply because the Institutions are unable to deal with them. With pathos that I cannot hope to rival, Mr. St. Clare Hill has shown us this, and so this afternoon I want rather to know what can be done for these people when one meets them in one's own line of life. They are visited occasionally, I know, by the visitor of the Home Teaching Societies, who brings them books and teaches them to read, but they have to fight the battle of life more or less off their own bat. Please do not understand me to desire to rush in recklessly where angels fear to tread. I do not want to enter into the political aspect, but there is a Bill now before Parliament dealing with insurance. Whatever our political bias, we must realise that the Workmen's Compensation Act, however good in the long run, is very hard on those men who are handicapped in the battle of life, such as the blind and the deaf and dumb. I think the Conference ought to use all its force, and every resource it has, to influence the people at Westminster to see that the Insurance Bill does not give them another blow.

I am trying to think of a poor man who has not got an Institution behind him, and cannot give even twopence. Let us buttonhole our Parliamentary representatives, and try to get them to use their influence so that some provision may be made for the blind who are handicapped in life, and cannot afford to pay the money, and whose employers will not pay the extra insurance.

I thought I would join the Clergy Friendly Society. I got into communication with the Secretary, and was examined and found all

right, but they rated me three years older than I am, because of my blindness. It is a shame, but I shall get it out of them. There are many blind men who cannot afford to pay this three years' excess over the ordinary rate. and I think it is a shame they should be asked to do so. I have no actuarial knowledge, and wish some of the older people would give me some information. I do not believe that the mortality of the blind is greater than that of the seeing. You never hear of a blind man under a steam roller. They say the risk is too great, but I should like to have the facts to lay before them.

I am not sure who the speaker was, but someone said he had certain facts which he would place before us. If we were in possession of the facts, and could go to these people, then these actuaries—whoever they may be—in spite of their blindness and bias, would have to admit that we have a claim and must be helped, not hindered.

Rev. R. Jenkins (Devon Home Teaching Association): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I stand here before you as a representative of the Devon Home Teaching Association. I was myself educated entirely at the Worcester Blind College, and have been for some years a member of the Committee of the Institution for the Blind in this City, so I do claim a certain amount of experience in matters connected with the blind, and have given a great deal of thought to problems such as are dealt with in this discussion. It is rather late in the day to try to say anything very fresh, and certainly too late to say anything very long. But surely we ought to leave here to-day with our ideas pretty well formed on a few points.

The first point I would like to take is: is it better for blind workers to work in connection with Institutions or on their own account? I think we may almost dismiss the idea of working in partnership with the sighted, because if they go in for professions they naturally do go into partnership: if they become clergy they become assistant curates, if lawyers they are junior partners, if organists they go into partnership with the clergymen, because in every well managed parish the clergyman and organist ought to work together. But in trade I am afraid it would be very difficult to find partners. Of course if the blind are ready to find the greater part of the brains and money, they may find partners, but I am afraid that generally speaking it would be difficult for them. I think it is a mistaken kindness to encourage them to set up in business on their own account; it is far better for them generally to work in Institutions. We find that very few sighted people when they leave school set up on their own account, because it is known

that they cannot succeed. Why should the blind be encouraged to do what sighted people seldom try to do, and would probably fail in if they did? Let the blind work in connection with Institutions; they will earn a better living, and will be more likely to continue earning a living. If they work in connection with an Institution they can give their whole time to the work, and there are people on the spot to put any finishing touches that may be required, and they have no responsibility with regard to the sale of the goods when finished.

I must not touch any of the other points, because the time is gone. There is, however, just one last thing I would like to say, which is this: do let us here try to solve the greatest difficulty that blind people have; the difficulty is not teaching them to work, but rather selling the work which they are able to produce. Now do let us try and persuade people that the work of the blind is every bit as good, and quite as cheap as any work that can be produced, and then they will buy. If people doubt this (and of course we don't expect them to take our word—at least I don't), but if people doubt this, let us get them to come to a Blind Institution, or get them to go to an Exhibition such as the one being held here in Exeter at the present time. If they examine the work for themselves and are competent judges they will see that it is good work, and if they are willing to give an honest price for an honest article, they will find that the goods are not at all above market price.

Mr. C. W. Ness (Edinburgh): I wish to speak of the blind in Scotland, and tell of the work carried on among those outside of Institutions, which form the great majority.

There were some eight or nine hundred connected with the Institutions in Scotland, but there were 3600 outside of them. For these there were ten Societies, each Society having its own library. The united libraries contained upwards of 19,000 volumes, and 17,000 volumes were circulated last year.

Regarding work, there were some selling drapery goods, tea, soap, books, picture post cards, etc. Knitting was also carried on, and mangling, shopkeeping, rug-making, net-making, etc. In addition to these more ordinary businesses, some of our blind strike out a special line of business for themselves. The Edinburgh Society assisted one through his University course, and he is now one of the ablest Congregational ministers.

Mr. Littlewood (Liverpool): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I am rather glad to be almost the last speaker, for I am the most

recently appointed superintendent in charge of a trading department. Ours is the oldest school in the Kingdom; perhaps our age rather goes against us, for our school dates back as far as 1791.

I came here to seek information, and have a good deal. I would like to join the other speakers in thanking Mr. Stainsby for his excellent paper, and I also wish to thank Mr. Pine for referring to our school (not by name) in the course of his address.

We have a fund, amounting to £150 a year, to help old pupils to go on in life when they leave the school, by grants for materials, etc. It seemed to me that Mr. Guy Campbell rather used Mr. Stainsby unfairly about localising the pupils we take, because he did not finish the paragraph he quoted from Mr. Stainsby's paper, and that made a deal of difference. There are about 250 of our old pupils with whom we try to keep in direct touch. I found that correspondence was not much good for this purpose, so I am trying to making a personal visit where possible, to see what the old pupils are doing, and the best way of helping them. Many of them live at great distances from the Institution, and this makes it difficult to keep in touch with them. It seems to me it would be better if certain districts would take more interest in their own blind, and do more for them.

Another point upon which I would like to have information is this: In Liverpool we take pupils up to 45 years of age. I believe we are the only Institution that will do this, and it is rather a question whether it is advisable. Other Institutions have fixed their limit as low as 21 years, and I wonder whether we are acting wisely in taking them at such an advanced age. Some will say that of course we get failures, but I must say that the majority have been most successful; they have been able to do their work, and it was rather a question in my mind whether I should recommend the Committee to alter the rule. We are trying to overcome the difficulty by boarding out the older men.

Mr. Gribben (Paisley): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—This is the third Conference I have attended, and I think by the time I have finished this one I shall have completed my apprenticeship. As soon as ever the Bill is passed for the payment of Members of Parliament, I am coming back here to see if I can get the seat for Exeter. You may just as well have a blind man in Parliament as not. There are plenty of short-sighted ones there already.

I happen to be the very last speaker this afternoon, but not the least, and I am afraid I will have to depart from my purpose of saying something about the paper. I want to supplement the things said by

the Scotchman. I am here as a member, and as a teacher, under the School Board of Greenock, and am not representing any Home Teaching Society. Mr. Ness said something about what was being done by these Societies in Scotland, and certainly good work is being done, and has been done for a number of years. But there is one item of information which I would like to give to this Conference with reference to the outdoor work of Scotland. There are ten Societies, and in connection with these there are twenty missionary teachers. In Scotland we do not underpay our teachers; the salaries are honest—not extraordinary and not parsimonious. The salaries bill for the ten Societies in question somewhat exceeds £2000, and the number of missionary teachers employed is somewhere about twenty. You must understand it is home teaching, so that a Government certificate is not necessary. Well, ten per cent. of these missionary teachers are blind, and ninety per cent. are sighted; that is to say ninety per cent. of the money goes to the sighted. I am not saying that the work is not well done, or even better done than it would be by the blind; but I am saying that ninety per cent. of that money goes to sighted men. And you here are breaking your hearts and puzzling your brains to find work for the blind. There is a new field ready to your hand. Let your new Employment Committee, when appointed, look after such things as that, and other lines besides, apart from the workshops. I am convinced that there are hundreds of places in which a qualified and trained blind man could earn a good salary, which would enable him to keep up a home and to enjoy life, because at the present time ninety per cent. of the blind only endure it. We want to enjoy it.

Miss E. Bainbrigge (London): All the teachers belonging to the Home Teaching Society in London are blind, and the Indigent Blind Visiting Society also employs blind teachers. This is one instance in which Scotland may copy the method in England with advantage.

Mr. H. Stainsby (London): I shall not detain you for more than two or three minutes. I have nothing to add to what I said in my paper, and nothing to withdraw, after the whole discussion that we have heard.

I may say that the paper was to my mind extremely meagre, but that I could not avoid. You had given me a colossal task to deal with such a vast subject in so short a time, and that is the reason why some people, like Mr. Stott, have misunderstood certain points. They have not dived quite deep enough.

I should like to say a word with regard to Mr. Gregory's remarks. On the whole I cordially agree with him. He spoke of the piecework question, however, and in that I cannot quite see with him. Now I agree that after a blind man has done his best, it is very sad that he should go away at the end of the week with a smaller amount in his pocket than his sighted competitor, but I should be very glad if Mr. Gregory or anybody else could point out how managers of workshops are to work unless on lines identical with those existing in factories where seeing people are employed. If piecework is the rule in ordinary factories, it must be so with the blind, otherwise you enormously enhance the cost of the article produced, and put it out of the market altogether.

Mr. Stott, Mr. Patrick, Mr. Harris, Mr. Frew Bryden, and several others are under the impression that I have ignored those losing their sight in adult life. I did not intend to do so, I assure you. I have the greatest possible sympathy with this class. I have known many cases of men, with families, suddenly losing their sight; such cases should be dealt with promptly and well. If you can, put them to the same occupation they followed before; but if not, place them in some workshop and let them acquire a trade that is easily learnt, and is fairly remunerative. I would like to drive home the fact that I did not for a moment intend to ignore these.

Mr. Stott asked who was to decide as to the selection of an occupation for a pupil. I think, to a very large extent this must be done by the pupil himself in the first instance. Unfortunately, Mr. Stott, you very frequently find that the pupil does not know himself, and then you must help him to decide. And it is necessary to take all the circumstances into consideration, and also consult the technical and literary teachers as to his capabilities, and then, after a good deal of discussion, you will probably arrive at the right conclusion.

Mr. Campbell, who is always kind, has criticised one point of my paper, and says I have contradicted myself in another part. I am sorry, but I do not think this is so. In one case I was dealing with education pure and simple, and in the other with occupations.

My last word is in regard to Scotland. I ought to have mentioned that a great deal is done there in the matter of home employment, and I think our Scotch friends ought to have fullest credit for this.

Mr. H. J. Wilson (London): Before we break up I am sure you would like me, on your behalf, to accord to Mr. Snow a very hearty vote of thanks, and not only to him, but also to the Chairman of this morning (Mr. Gadd), who acted so well.

Those in favour of the vote of thanks kindly signify by acclamation.

(Carried unanimously).

THE CHAIRMAN : I won't detain you any longer, but thank you on behalf of the Chairman of this morning (Mr. Gadd) and myself.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON.

PRESENTATION TO MR. HENRY J. WILSON.

CHAIRMAN : Rev. St. Clare Hill.

THE CHAIRMAN : Of all the Meetings this week, there will not be one where there will be greater union of intention than this one. We are here for the purpose of doing honour to him, who, for more than a quarter of a century has given such splendid service in aid of everything connected with the Blind. (Applause.) It is not too much to say, Ladies and Gentlemen, that Mr. Wilson has done a great work for the blind in connection with that Charity of which he is Secretary. Many blind people have cause to bless the Gardner's Trust, and I am sure that many bless Mr. Wilson, because it has been through his instrumentality that the good intended by the founder of Gardner's Trust, has found the right channel and been carried out in the right way. It often happens that a great Charity misses its mark in its administration, but that cannot be truthfully said in reference to the grand, benevolent and beneficent organisation founded by Mr. Gardner, of which Mr. Wilson has been Secretary ever since its foundation.

But, Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Wilson has endeared himself to us not only by means of his position in connection with the Gardner's Trust ; he has been associated with every movement for the benefit of the Blind, which has been called into existence in our generation. In him we find genius, tact, wisdom, and a certain natural something which has made him what he is—the very centre of every philanthropic movement for the education of the class of society in which we are interested. And he has been assisted by one whose province it has been to be a helpmate in every sense of the word ; Mrs. Wilson has been a most valuable assistant to her husband. We are always pleased to be greeted by her, and her genial manner has done much to press forward that which her husband has deemed to be the pressing matter of the hour. We appreciate these two grand workers in the blind world. We honour them, and are truly grateful to them on behalf of the whole of the

blind world. But, Ladies and Gentlemen, our thanks are not merely empty words, for we can express our feelings in a more concrete form; a subscription list was opened, and its characteristic feature was its universality. This afternoon we offer to Mr. and Mrs. Wilson these presents, which consist of a Silver Tray, duly inscribed, a Cheque for £100, and the inevitable Teapot for Mrs. Wilson to give tea to her friends when they come to see her. We offer these presents to Mr. and Mrs. Wilson. with the deepest feeling of appreciation for what they have done for the cause of the blind, and hope they will be spared for many years to enjoy these gifts, and to give us the benefit of their skill, wisdom, and genial presence.

I now have pleasure in calling upon Mr. Illingworth to read an address duly printed on parchment.

MR. ILLINGWORTH read the address as follows:

PRESENTATION OF

TESTIMONIAL TO HENRY JOSIAH WILSON, ESQ., F.C.T.B.,

AND SOUVENIR GIFT TO MRS. WILSON.

Committee—

Miss I. M. Heywood	Mr. A. B. Norwood
Miss B. Taylor	Mr. M. Priestley
Sir F. J. Campbell	Mr. H. W. P. Pine
Mr. C. M. Collingwood	Dr. A. W. G. Ranger
Rev. St. Clare Hill (Chairman)	Mr. H. Stainsby (Treas.)
Mr. W. Hy. Illingworth (Secretary)	Mr. W. M. Stone

The spontaneity of the origin of the movement in favour of this Testimonial was only equalled by the unanimity and enthusiasm with which the idea was received in the country and carried to a successful issue.

The Committee do not desire to indulge here in empty panegyrics regarding Mr. Wilson, but simply to place on record a few facts concerning the man whom they count it a privilege to honour and the great work which he has done in the interests of those, the amelioration of whose condition this Conference is met to further.

The greatest event which occurred in the Blind World in the course of the last century—a century remarkable for the development of the education and employment of the blind—was undoubtedly the founding of the Gardner's Trust for the Blind, a Trust for the disposal of the Annual Interests on the magnificent bequest of £300,000.

One can readily imagine with what real anxiety the Trustees of this Charity looked about them for "just the right sort of man" to undertake the duties of their Secretary and Advisor in Chief.

That their choice fell upon Henry Josiah Wilson is a matter at once for our congratulation of the Trustees and for the heartfelt gratitude of the blind people of England and of those who labour in their interests.

Truly the ways of Providence are inscrutable! Which of us, had we been there and seen young Henry Wilson, the fearless rough-rider, wielding the lasso and rounding up the mustang or the wild ox on the South American prairie, in the years 1867 to 1880, would have recognised a future administrator of a great and beneficent Charity, or prophesied a career of such a strikingly diverse character as that which has made him what he is to-day, the trusted Friend and Counsellor of the Blind and their Friends?

We do not believe it was mere chance that guided the Committee of the Gardner Trust to fix upon Henry Josiah Wilson as their first Secretary.

The training of the American prairie life developed something more than an athletic physique. The faculties of observation, quickness of perception, courage and good judgment, as well as infinite patience and tact—all essential to the successful hunter—are, you will all agree, the very qualities, the exercise of which have made Mr. Wilson so eminently fitted for the position he holds to-day. There is still another characteristic quality of our friend which is, perhaps, more outstanding than any of those already enumerated—his absolute unselfishness, and here Mrs. Wilson joins issue with him; for had she not been in real sympathy with his work, she must often have chafed and rebelled against his absence from her side when his official duties were over, and he was giving up his much needed leisure for hour after hour of voluntary work in the same cause.

Most of the gentlemen on this platform know to their cost what a serious encroachment on their Saturday afternoons their service on one or more of the various Committees (other than official) of work in the interest of the blind entails, but Mr. Wilson, in virtue of his eminent qualifications and superior wisdom, is called upon to serve upon all, and is Chairman of most.

We would mention some of these Committees—

1. International Conference.

2. National Committee for the better and more general employment of the Blind.
3. College of Teachers of the Blind.
4. Pensions Committee.
5. Prevention of Blindness.
6. Metropolitan Union.
7. Union of Unions of Agencies for the Blind.
8. Promotion of a Bill for State Aid.

By his courteous and kindly readiness to assist and advise any and every Blind Institution or Society that applies to him for counsel or assistance he has earned the affection and esteem of practically every one connected with work for the blind in this country. We say *affection* advisedly, because the magnetism of his genial personality quickly gets to the hearts of all with whom he comes in contact.

It is readily seen from the above that Mr. Wilson takes an active interest in every phase of work for promoting the welfare of the blind, and justly occupies his position as a centre of reference for most of the matters connected with this difficult and complex problem.

The remembrance of all these things and the general recognition of his excellent service, official and honorary, as an able administrator, as a true, unfailing friend, as a typical English gentleman and a right "jolly good fellow," and of Mrs. Wilson's sympathetic comradeship, prompted the numerous people who now desire to ask Mr. Wilson's acceptance of this mark of their esteem and appreciation.

The Committee now request Lady Campbell kindly to present the gifts, and to read the inscription thereon, in the hope that Mr. and Mrs. Wilson may be long spared to us all and to each other, to continue the beneficent work to which it has pleased God to call them.

Signed for the Committee—

St. Clare Hill.
W. Hy. Illingworth.
Henry Stainsby.

Lady Campbell (Norwood): The tray bears the following inscription:—

This Silver Tray
and Cheque for One Hundred Pounds
Presented to
Henry Josiah Wilson, Esq., F.C.T.B.,

by numerous friends, well-wishers, and colleagues, as a mark of their affection and esteem, and in recognition of his valuable and unsparing labours in the interests of the Blind; also a Silver Teapot to Mrs. Wilson as a mark of appreciation of the whole-hearted sympathy with which she has seconded and supported the efforts of her husband.

July, 1911.

Lady Campbell's remarks: Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, dear Friends,—If you could read the letters that accompanied the contributions to the Testimonial, they would delight your hearts as much as the gifts we present to-day.

It was our privilege to forward the contributions of the Staff and present pupils of the Royal Normal College, and also of former Gardner scholars, all of whom expressed their appreciation of Mr. Wilson's uniform kindness to them. Replies came from countries as far distant as Canada, South Africa, and Armenia.

At Urfa, in Armenia, is a small school for the blind, taught by Mary Haratounian, a poor blind girl who was at the College for two years. Mary's contribution arrived just before the fund closed, and in her broken English, she expressed her pleasure at being allowed to join the large circle of friends, on whose behalf I now present this tray and cheque to you, and this teapot to Mrs. Wilson.

Mr. H. J. Wilson (London): Mr. Chairman, Lady Campbell, and my many Friends,—for I hope I may safely call you that after so many years of strenuous work together on behalf of the Blind. It is impossible for me to adequately express the feelings of my wife and myself on this occasion,for the kind tokens of affection and friend ship shown to us. My wife says that she does not feel that she ought to share in this kind presentation, having done no special work for the blind; but I am afraid I must disagree with her, because I can assure you, from painful experience, that she looks pretty sharply after my humble self, and takes care I do not do anything unwise to hurt my general health. As regards myself, I can hardly think that I am the Wilson referred to in the Testimonial; it seems to me there is too much of an artistic touch about it. Really it looks very like the work of those artistic photographers, who take all the wrinkles out.

We accept and welcome with the deepest pleasure not only the handsome gifts, but all they represent—so much love and kindness

from our friends which it is impossible to value too highly. I can assure you that we shall always greatly value the massive silver tray and silver teapot, and regard them as an heirloom to be handed down to our son, and in time, we hope, to his wife.

And here, parenthetically, I may remark that I believe the last occasion on which my wife received a present of silver was on our silver wedding day, when I gave her a new mustard pot, and she then expressed some fears that I meant to make it hot for her literally as well as metaphorically.

On an occasion of this kind one's mind naturally goes back to the beginning of things. Thirty years ago next February I took up work for the Blind, and felt a pigmy among giants, such as our dear friend Dr. Armitage, Mr. Buckle, and many others, including one whom I am glad to say is still with us, Sir Francis Campbell. To compare what was then being done for the Blind with what is being accomplished for and by them to-day, is almost like comparing light and darkness, although I do not mean to imply that the sun has fully risen yet. In those days Dr. Armitage was fighting for the introduction of Braille into our schools; there was no compulsory education, and many blind children languished unknown and unhelped. Each Institution played off its own bat, with little or no interchange of opinion, and with very little desire for mutual help. Now all these things have conspicuously changed; Braille is the universal type in our schools; the education of blind children is no longer a thing of chance, unless they are hidden away by the mistaken and cruel kindness of their parents; and the Institutions have all drawn closer together, and are doing their work on behalf of the Blind in that union which alone is strength.

During the last few years progress has been made by leaps and bounds, as for instance by the formation of the College of Teachers of the Blind, one of the efforts which seems to hold the highest promise for the advancement of the education of the Blind, by raising the qualifications of their teachers. Again, by calling into existence the Unions of Societies, which I believe are destined to solve most of the difficulties of the Blind, and to leave none unhelped or uncared for. Then again, by the strenuous fight against ophthalmia of new born infants, by making this disease compulsorily notifiable, and in other ways—in fact by turning off the tap which has been running too long and too freely with such disastrous results. I have no time to refer to the printing establishments, and the splendid work being done by them; by the

libraries ; and by other branches of work on behalf of the Blind.

I must now conclude by reiterating the warmest and most heartfelt thanks of my wife and myself for your more than kind gifts, of which we shall always feel proud. The years are going on and I am rapidly qualifying for the old age pension, but I am thankful to say the old horse has still got a kick left in him. My keenest interests will ever be among the Blind, and it is most gratifying to all of us who work for them to see the wonderful developments that the years have brought, and this gives us confidence to go forward. knowing as we do that He who began this work will surely bring it also to a good issue, for, as our College motto says, " Nisi Dominus frustra " (" Without God we can do nothing.")

THURSDAY MORNING.

CHAIRMAN : Mr. Alderman Stocker (Chairman of Exeter Education Committee).

MR. COLLINGWOOD : Ladies and Gentlemen,—It is quite the orthodox thing for me to announce that this gentleman or that lady is unable to fulfill his or her obligation in presiding over these Sessions.

Lady Meath was asked to be good enough to preside over the Conference at this morning's session. She was in South Africa at the time the request was made, and replied that she was not sure of being at liberty, but would preside if possible. I wrote to her ladyship again urging how much the representatives here would like her to take the chair, and she consented to come. Less than a week ago she wrote saying that owing to the illness of the Earl she could not leave London, and under those circumstances Alderman Stocker, the Chairman of our Education Committee—a gentleman whom I may describe as the leading educationalist of Exeter—one who has been chairman of our School Authority for 30 years continuously—kindly consented to take the chair. I think we could not have a more appropriate chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN : Ladies and Gentlemen,—Your Secretary is very flattering in his remarks, but personally I think he could have got a better substitute for Lady Meath. You will agree with me that I am a bold man to take the place of the lady you expected.

I am not going to commit the error of attempting to make a speech, and I am afraid that some of us have already gone a little too far in expressing sympathy with the blind ; I do not feel that amount of sympathy, but I feel it incumbent on me and every member of society to perform that educational work in training the mind of the young, and I look upon a blind person as I look upon a young child, who has to be trained and educated to make a good and proper member of society. The addresses up to now have been mostly of an educational nature, but to-day Lady Campbell is coming to us, with all the authority she possesses as Superintendent of that great Institution at Norwood, and will talk to you about what is best to be done in order to prepare the

blind for social life, and to make them useful and a blessing to themselves and to those round about them; that is the true aim of education. The legislature has at last awakened to the fact that education does not consist alone in reading and writing, but in preparing the pupil for a working life, to be useful to himself, and to use those faculties with which he has been blessed to his own advantage and for the welfare of others; and education consists as much in training the blind or other physically defective people as in training the vast number of those who possess all their faculties. I say with our Mayor, who spoke on Monday last, that I am sure more help ought to be given from the Imperial Exchequer for the training of the blind and other defectives, than is now given. They already say that a man or a woman at the age of 70 requires State assistance; but those who suffer from physical defects have generally arrived at that so-called age of helplessness long before the man in possession of all his faculties. In some cases State Aid ought to be given from the moment of birth to those who are physically defective.

I will not stand longer between you and the address of Lady Campbell, except to say that Mr. Wilson suggested yesterday that the children of the Exeter Schools should be invited to visit the Exhibition in Queen's Hall, and I caused last night a circular to be sent to head teachers of every school in the City, asking that they would, during school hours, take some of the children to the Exhibition who would be likely to profit by what they saw there, and I hope that during to-day and to-morrow some of them will find that they will be able to do so.

May I also say that from what I have heard among working men in Exeter, your Conference and the discussions that have taken place are being largely discussed. One cannot help rejoicing that the Conference has been held in Exeter, for not only is it awakening in the working man a knowledge of what is required for the education of those who are physically defective; but in all probability it will result in his taking a greater personal interest in the work. And here is the advantage—that we people who have to administer any public funds always have the ratepayer objecting to any increased expenditure; but if you can excite the sympathy of the working classes, who form a large proportion of the ratepayers, you get sums granted for work of this sort much more easily. I am delighted, therefore, that this Conference has been held in our midst, and that up to now the result has been so good.

MR. H. J. WILSON (London): I wish to give out two notices. The first is that the Reports of the several Committees are in print, and will be given to everybody who wants them at the end of the session; also, voting papers will be given out to delegates only at the door at the end of the session.

I heard recently that there is going to be a Conference on the Blind in Japan at the end of the month, and I intended later to move a formal resolution to that Conference; but I learn this morning that Mr. Yoshimoto goes to London this afternoon on his way to attend the Conference at Tokio. I could hardly realise that it was to take place so soon. Mr. Yoshimoto goes direct from this Conference to the one which is to be held in Tokio, and in order to give a further impetus to the report of this Conference that he has already written out, I think we ought to send some message to the Conference at Tokio, with the best wishes of this Conference for the success of their proceedings and for the efforts they are making for the amelioration of the condition of the blind in Japan. Mr. Yoshimoto says that in Japan they have some very fine workers, compared with whom he is as nothing; so if it be true that they have better workers than he, it will be interesting to see what they are going to do. I am sure you will all agree that we ought to send some expression of greeting to this forthcoming Conference, and I hope you will do so.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will now call on Lady Campbell to read her paper.

LADY CAMPBELL: I should like to say a foreword if I may do so. My paper may perhaps seem to contradict the statement I made that blind children are not a distinct species, but I maintain that they are not different because of their lack of sight, it is on account of the lack of wisdom on the part of parents and visitors.

MR. TATE (Bradford): May I suggest, on behalf of the blind ones present, that if you make any cuts you will give them a hint where to look in their copies?

Training in the Requirements of Social Life at Home and in Society : and the best Methods of securing it.

By LADY CAMPBELL.

I accepted the invitation to read a paper on this subject, believing that the appearance, bearing, and conduct of blind persons had a close connection with their happiness and success in after life, that a consideration of the subject would enable us to be more helpful to our pupils while they were in school, and that we could send them iuto the world better prepared to meet their sighted companions on an equal footing. In preparing it, I have had constantly in mind my own experience in schoolwork, and I feel that the manner in which I have treated the subject is, perhaps, more suitable for a gathering of school-teachers, than for this audience. In dealing with the various topics, I shall speak frankly, and hope none will feel hurt or take offence. I have received thoughtful answers to my questionnaire from many Superintendents and Teachers on both sides the Atlantic, to whom I am greatly obliged; but I feel especially grateful to those blind men and women who have made valuable suggestions. I regret that time will not allow more copious extracts from the replies received.

As a rule, the Blind are anxious to become familiar with all the amenities of social life, but parents, friends, and teachers *set too low a standard, and overlook* many breaches

of good manners. Young people who are not blind, have points in Social Training enforced again and again, but friends shrink from mentioning the same faults to blind boys and girls, feeling perhaps, that blindness ought to be an excuse, or that the failing could not be overcome, if it were pointed out to them. As true politeness proceeds from genuine goodness of heart, and the foundation of good breeding is kindness, any teaching on the subject must deal largely with conduct, and have for its basis, character-building. "The Golden Rule contains the last word on manners, as it does on most other laws of living." If I seem to ignore this point of view, and dwell on minor matters of etiquette, it is because parents and teachers do not realise how much normal children owe to that imitative faculty, which is so strong in childhood, and that blind children must be taught many things which their brothers and sisters seem to do instinctively.

1. *The effects of good or bad manners—*
   (*a*) *On the blind individual;*
   (*b*) *On those with whom he or she associates.*

In quoting the replies to this question, I have placed first. those received from my blind correspondents, as their experience gives weight to their answers.

"Good manners, a good address, a prepossessing appearance, everything that helps to make a favourable impression upon others, is of even greater value to the blind than to those who see. For us, therefore, who are without sight, the importance of right training in such things can hardly be over-estimated. Bad manners. or even mere awkwardness of carriage, will often outweigh real ability, industry, and moral worth. The public will not take time to consider our character or history; its judgments are made up, as a rule, from appearances and first impressions. Faults that may be looked upon as marks of genius in sec-

ing people are taken to be signs of mental inferiority, and are frequently the sole cause of failure in the blind." "The effect of bad manners on those with whom a blind individual associates is the spread of a bad tone, if the companions are blind, and if they are sighted, the growth of open repulsion to the blind as a class, or pity for them as a race set apart, who can neither behave nor be treated like ordinary beings. A pleasant, courteous manner will often render sighted people willing to excuse little accidents or awkwardnesses arising from our blindness, which otherwise cause considerable irritation. The associates will take greater delight in ministering pleasure, and supplying what is lacking in the life of the blind. Our manners are to a great extent, the expression of what we are, and it is by our manners that we are judged." "The bad manners of a blind man are set down to his blindness, and thus opinion is confirmed that he is a freak, a type of person of whom the man in the street is very anxious to keep clear. After all, we need to show the sighted how to treat the blind, and vice versa."

"When a blind person has been trained so that he is conscious that his manners are all that they should be, it gives him a feeling of security that does away with awkwardness and diffidence. I know young men and women who refuse to ride, dance, or take any part at public functions, because they fear they may appear awkward. They know that such an appearance would count against them, and so they would rather deny themselves than to run the risk of making mistakes; their refusal, not being understood by the public, is misinterpreted. The individual then becomes an object of pity, for who does not pity the one who loses his share of the pleasure that is offered him. Too great stress cannot be laid upon the subject of manners. I would have the school diploma include proficiency in manners as well as studies." "There is much more in the title of this paper than would seem at first sight. The

blind person is dependent on his surroundings, and he is apt to copy what he hears. The question is one of the greatest importance in regard to the attitude blind persons present to the sighted, as their reputation is formed thereby. If an unfavourable impression is created, it will reflect upon the whole class." "While manners do not make the man, blind or seeing, they have a very large effect in the estimation one has of himself, and the estimation in which he is held. Good manners give to the blind individual a consciousness of self-respect, and bad manners the reverse. Good manners remove the barrier which exists between the blind and sighted, while bad manners isolate him. Bad manners cause the sighted to be critical of the blind as a class, and to think them eccentric. A peculiarity of manner, which in a sighted person would be passed over without comment, would in a blind person be considered due to his blindness."

These answers are so comprehensive, it is unnecessary to add anything more, and I pass to the second question.

2. *What is the condition of the Children who enter your School as to—*
   (*a*) *Manner of Walking?*
   (*b*) *Manner of Talking?*
   (*c*) *Manner of Eating?*
   (*d*) *Awkward Habits and Mannerisms?*

There was a general consensus of opinion that in the matter of walking, talking, and eating, there is need for constant watchfulness and correction on the part of the teacher. Of course the children vary, and occasionally you find some who have been brought up under wise and judicious guidance at home, but the following quotations show the general tenor of the replies.

"Those who enter the Kindergarten are much below the normal child. I am of opinion that, through mistaken kindness, blind children not sent to Institutions lose a great deal of useful training." "Much depends on the nature of previous environment and training. In practically every

case the totally blind walk timidly with hands extended, and the semi-blind tend to stoop; while in both there is a tendency to drag the foot. Some of the pupils show the effect of wise home training, but the great majority show that they have been sadly neglected in this respect. Awkwardness in walking, faulty speech as regards language and voice production, bad habits of eating and unpleasant manners, are very common." "For nine years of my work with blind children of Kindergarten age, I can safely say, not one child in twenty anything like approaches average, normal, sighted children in the matter of walking, talking, or eating."

Walking. — The faults noticeable in walking are: Dragging the feet, lifting them too high, bending the knees as the foot touches the ground, stepping more heavily on one foot than the other, rocking the body, bending the head forward, keeping the chin too high, stooping the shoulders, and stretching the hands in front. That blind children should walk timidly with outstretched hands in new surroundings is natural, and will soon cure itself, but the other faults are very hard to correct.

The first essential of an upright carriage is to impress upon the blind person the necessity of keeping the ears, shoulders, hips, knees, and ankles in the same straight line. A deflection of any one of these parts of the body from that straight line will instantly produce some of the faults already alluded to. A large part of the stiffness in walking is due to the failure to swing the leg from the hips, and the preponderance of flat-footedness to be met with among the blind. For curing defects in walking carefully explain the fault, analyse the movements required for correct walking, and show wherein the joints and muscles fail to act properly. Let the child examine the leg when it is moving properly, and walk with him yourself, until he catches the swing of a free, easy gait. Give plenty of physical training

that will exercise the legs, as running, jumping, rope-skipping, dancing, swimming, drilling, skating, and balance movements. I well remember the vain efforts made by our pupils, when a Swedish teacher told them to try the exercise known as "Leap on the spot."

In laying out playgrounds, have them free from trees, shrubs, and all other obstacles, with definite boundaries that the foot recognises, so that the pupils will run with confidence. At the Royal Normal College all the steps and turns in the walks are marked by a slight elevation in the asphalte paving. Some may object, on the ground that the pupils will not find these marks when they go into the world, but if the foot is taught to recognise landmarks instinctively, the blind man or woman will find indications for himself in the house, the building where he is employed, or familiar streets, to guide him in his daily business.

Talking.—You sometimes meet children who will not utter a word unless directly questioned, but many others talk incessantly. I suppose all children are anxious to join in the conversation of their elders, and consider their opinions worthy of utterance, but sighted children are usually checked for this fault, while the loquacity of the blind child is often considered a mark of extraordinary intellect; they are allowed to interrupt their elders without reproof. I recall an instance of a father, who was explaining that he was the only member of the family whom his son would obey, and during the conversation the boy constantly interrupted, without the father realising that even *his* authority was not respected. When the boy went home at the end of the month, for a week-end visit, it was a revelation to his family that he could behave like other children. Methods of correction will readily occur to any teacher, as the fault results from the want of discipline at home, and that tendency to self-conceit which is fostered in children by over-praise.

Incorrect and indistinct pronunciation, and faulty voice production, are common failings in all schools, blind and sighted. I recently read an article in the London "Times," criticising severely the vocalists of the present day, which stated that unless the words were printed one could not tell whether they were singing in English, French, or Italian. In trying to improve the vocalization of our pupils, we meet with a difficulty not experienced in teaching singing or elocution to the sighted, from the fact that they cannot see the facial expression of the teacher, or their failure to reproduce the same. For clear, distinct utterance, the teeth must be separated and the lower jaw flexible. As in walking, when description fails to produce the desired result, the pupil must examine the facial movements of a good speaker. In our reading-classes we should place more stress on clear enunciation than on rapid reading.

Eating.—The instances in which children have been taught to manage properly at the table are few and far between. The usual course is along the line of least resistance, to allow fingers and afterwards a spoon. I know one child who was brought up on a bottle until he was six years old. This matter will be referred to later.

Mannerisms.—The hardest faults to cure are those mannerisms which are peculiar to some blind children. They arise from their inability to see how others conduct themselves, and the failure of friends to correct their awkward, disagreeable habits. I refer to the swaying of the body, rolling the head, capering about, making facial contortions, bad positions in sitting and standing, putting the fingers in the eye, or shaking an object in front of the eye where there is a little sight. The semi-blind often hold their heads awkwardly in order that the light may strike that part of the eyeball which is not defective. If these mannerisms are not cured in childhood and youth, they will creep out even in mature life. Again, parents are misled, and

think that many of these actions are symptons of great activity, and will say with pride, "He is never still." It is indeed an indication of the desire of the young for activity, but it is misdirected energy, which should be turned into other channels by providing physical exercises, games, and sports.

Those teachers who receive children from Kindergarten Schools testify to the great difference between them and those children who have lived at home, and point out the advantages of a well-organised Residential School. It is almost impossible in the home to get that *constant supervision and correction* which blind children need, as among the poor the child is necessarily left much to itself, and among the well-to-do it is too much waited upon and indulged. Bad habits and awkward mannerisms excite pity, amusement, or repugnance, and increase the handicap which blindness already imposes. Anything we can do to save our pupils from enconntering these obstacles will be time well spent. If repeated correction proves unavailing, restrictive measures must be resorted to, and a resourceful teacher will devise ways and means. One Superintendent finds the children who enter his School singularly free from these bad habits, and cautions against continually nagging them for faults. He also suggests the cure is to be found in strengthening the nerve power by medical treatment, proper feeding, and physical exercises.

In order to save bringing discredit on the blind as a class, those who are addicted to mannerisms ought not to be taken to public places until they are cured of their awkwardness; and this deprivation will furnish a powerful incentive to improvement. In dealing with senior pupils your corrections must be tactful: you can appeal to their pride, and show the benefit they will derive from being able to move with freedom, and carry themselves so naturally that people will forget their blindness.

An important factor in overcoming the helplessness and awkwardness of blind children is the co-operation of parents. Without it a child relapses into his old ways during the holidays, and the work has to be begun anew each term. If the parent does not see the necessity of self-helpfulness, the child returns with a feeling that his teachers are unreasonable in their requirements, and slackens his efforts. The parents should be urged to visit the school, and every opportunity taken of showing them how self-helpful the blind can become.

A useful leaflet on the "Care and Training of Young Blind Children" has been issued by the Metropolitan Union of Institutions, Societies, and Agencies for the Blind.

3. Best Methods of overcoming the results of defective home training.

(a) With Children.

(b) With Senior Pupils.

Although this subject has been partly dealt with in the previous paragraphs, there are some replies I wish to quote, especially the first four, which are from blind teachers.

"The greatest care and watchfulness should be exercised by teachers, whose heart must be in their work if success is to be obtained. I am decidedly of opinion that partially blind teachers could do much to remedy many evils, and suggest that these teachers, when possessing the necessary qualifications, should be employed in teaching the blind, as they can help in many ways which might be resented by the pupils when coming from one not labouring under the same difficulties as themselves."

"This question is one of the answers to the query—are Day Schools good for the Blind? I say they are not, and that all blind children should be sent away from home. I know it will be urged that they soon lose all they have learned when they leave school. I can only say with the

Irishman, that if none sticks some does. Let children learn at School as much as possible, although they may not use it at home: it is in the background, and can always be brought up to the mark when needed, and places them on equal terms with many of the sighted around them. In the case of adults it is hard to suggest means of improvement, but if a number of blind persons are brought together much may be done."

"Let the pupils compare themselves with sighted children, and find out to what extent the difference is or is not necessary. If they can be made to realise that fault-finding is a demonstration of real care for them, a great point is gained."

"The teachers should thoroughly appreciate the difficulties of each child in planning means of correction. One has to be careful not to make the child do too much at first, or nervousness occurs, and the difficulty is increased."

"Mere awkwardness in our pupils is corrected to some extent by our Kindergarten and physical culture exercises. But the task of securing in blind students the ease and grace of bearing, so essential to their success in after life, is a difficult one; one calling for the utmost tact, intelligence, kindness, and patience on the part of all who have the responsibility of such students in any and every part of their school course. Parents of blind children should themselves be taught the needs, possibilities, and means of good home training. The children should be taught and encouraged, both at home and at school, to take part in the games of their seeing companions, and to play with seeing children."

"Make the teachers' salaries adequate, and secure those capable of supplying a mother's place; incompetent house mothers can never fill such a place. Do not be satisfied until you have secured the best officers. Write to the

parents, not once, but many times, and especially just before vacations, informing them what you are trying to do for the children, and suggest certain ways in which they can help."

"By individual work, rouse in the pupils a desire to make the most of themselves, and by constant reminder and precept help them to correct the mannerisms and awkward habits of which they may remain unaware unless their attention is called to them. The cottage life lends good opportunity for such individual work. Once get them interested in their school life, and the desire to share it as fully and normally as possible, will follow."

4. How to secure

(a) Cleanliness in person and dress.
(b) Neatness and suitability in clothing.
(c) Training in table manners and the use of knife fork, serviette, etc.

Cleanliness in Person and Dress. — In listening to the outlines of a successful course on "Domestic Economy and Home Training," I was much struck by the statement that the first lessons in dusting were preceded by a talk on microbes and their fondness for lurking in corners where dust had accumulated. If we adopt the same course, and precede the talks on cleanliness by lessons on physiology and hygiene, there will be more chance of our suggestions being followed, as the pupils will learn that a careful observance of cleanliness is essential to good health. They should also be made to understand the effect produced by slovenly dress on those with whom they associate. To secure cleanliness in person and dress rules must be formulated, and their observance secured by a strict but kindly supervision. An eminent educationalist has said if children do not learn concentration before the age of thirteen they do not acquire it afterwards. This statement

applies with equal force to cleanliness and neatness; good habits must be formed early, or there will be a hard battle before the previous bad habits are supplanted.

One Matron emphasised a vital point when she said, "*Time and means should be provided.*" In drawing up the time-table a fixed time should be allowed for the care of teeth, nails, hair, clothes, etc. The pupils must be impressed with the fact that linen soils and dust settles on clothes, making frequent changing and brushing necessary, and as Managers we had better pay a little more for the laundry bill rather than tolerate slovenly habits. With young children an inspection before breakfast is desirable, with a word of praise for "shining morning face" and well brushed hair. In the class-room the teacher should not tolerate dirty hands and face; if a boy is sent a few times to perform his ablutions, he will probably be more careful in the future. You will create in the mind of the child a respect for his clothes, if you arrange a time when he can put on old clothes or an overall, and play in the dirt regardless of consequences; without some such provision you may secure tidiness at the expense of all childish fun. With older pupils the inspection and advice should be tactful, and constant appeals made to their self-respect and pride. Success will depend upon the alertness of your staff, and *the knowledge on the part of the pupils that you expect them to maintain a certain standard.*

Neatness and Suitability of Dress. — In these matters, as in many others, the limitations of the blind should be recognised, and met by careful explanations and practical demonstrations; they should be led to feel it is advisable for them to make the eyes of their friends serve instead of their own. We have only to notice the over-trimmed dresses, ultra fashionable hats, dirty white gloves, and high-heeled shoes one sees on a half-holiday or Sunday,

to realise that want of neatness and suitability in dress is a not infrequent failing of the community at large.

The following quotation is from an address by Miss Blanche Streather, of the Royal Technical Institute, Salford, to the Yorkshire Association of Teachers of Domestic Science :—

"Can we make the wage earner understand that plainness and general neatness spell success, that a dirty lace hat is not suitable for business hours, that the flimsy blouse is out of place in the workroom? The hat and blouse may have been very tempting when new, but the buyer lacked the power of realising what their appearance would be after their newness had gone. The clever buyer considers carefully when the garment has to be worn through all its stages. Can we help to make women realise that neatness is, if anything, more important at breakfast than at tea? We shall be on the safe side if we advocate quiet dressing, discourage all intense colours, and suggest that one colour should be used throughout one costume. And here I would advise the woman who is anxious to be well dresaed to take one colour as her own, and in the main buy nothing else. She may thus have all her accessories to match at a moderate outlay, and be sure of a satisfactory result."

This advice seems specially suitable for our blind girls, as their blindness already makes them exceptional, and to have clothes in the extreme of any fashion attracts more attention. Both for utility and becomingness, bright colours should be avoided, and as a rule hats with brims render blindness less conspicuous. Lessons on pleasing combinations of colours can be given in the Kindergarten, and continued in the sewing class, where durability and suitability of material can also be discussed.

The previous remarks may seem to imply that "how to dress" is only a matter of concern to the female sex, but

our male pupils should be advised that conspicuous checks and stripes, and bright coloured ties, detract from a gentlemanly appearance. I was glad to find one of my blind correspondents advocating the wearing of dark glasses. If the blindness causes any disfigurement, consideration for others should lead to ready acquiescence in such a regulation.

TABLE MANNERS.—Judging from the replies, there is no part of social training that is more neglected in our Schools for the Blind than table manners. All the blind persons who answered the questions emphasised the importance of such training. I quote a letter received from the other side of the Atlantic:

"I feel that our blind fellows are unquestionably deficient in the matter of social etiquette and decorum from several points, particularly table manners. It is my conviction that there is but one thing on which a blind man should call for quarter so far as table etiquette is concerned, and that is the removal of bones from a plate of fish. I blame such of our schools as do not insist upon the practice and accomplishment of these matters on the part of their students. The pupils should be taught step by step, beginning with the easiest things through the limit of each one's ability, reducing the method by systematic practice."

Another said: "The table should be nicely laid, and the children taught to use knife, fork, serviette, and so forth. It must always be remembered that sighted people learn by watching other people at the table, but each blind child is a law unto himself, until actually shown how to do a thing."

Then follows very clear directions for overcoming many of the difficulties, which I will not quote as it might bore you. Any teacher who is anxious to help her blind pupils can probably obtain hints from blind people who are models in this particular.

Each of our dining-rooms is furnished with tables, set with all the appurtenances of a well-regulated home, and each one presided over by a Matron or Teacher. Plenty of time should be allowed for meals, talk of "shop" and unkind gossip should be banished, and the meal-time made pleasant by cheerful conversation. One teacher thus expresses her sense of the feelings that must be aroused before one would undertake the correction of the most awkward cases :

"Training in table manners and the use of knife, fork, serviette, etc., *must be done by persons who are really shocked and distressed by bad manners.* It seems rather hard on the teachers, but I do believe this very important work should be done by them, and left as little as possible to supervisors who look after the children out of class. The latter grow in a measure insensible to many bad habits on the part of the children, but the teachers as a rule do not. The plan of not allowing very bad-mannered children to sit at table with the rest, until they learn the proprieties, is an excellent one."

At the Royal Normal College we often arrange for the most helpless to come to dinner a quarter of an hour earlier, as it is easier to deal with them alone, and older ones who have had no teaching are often sensitive if corrected before their companions. The movements required to cut meat, manage vegetables, etc, must be analysed, the method of instruction systematized, and the same instructions given by all the members of the staff.

Someone may say, "The pupils will not have all these table appointments at home, why use them in our Institutions?" But many of them will be placed in positions where such knowledge is necessary, and all should have the chance to acquire it. I would even plead for it with sighted children who are gathered in Institutions. I well remember the impression made upon me thirty years ago, when I saw

a tea-table set for sighted boys without table-cloth, knife, or plate—just three chunks of bread-and-butter (you could not call them slices), and a mug of tea for each. The refining influence of a well-set table would have told on the character of those boys, and sent them into the world with a self-respect that would have made them better citizens.

5. *Best Methods of Training in the Etiquette of Social Life.*

   (a) *In Company.*
   (b) *In the Street.*
   (c) *In Church.*

In Company.—When our pupils go out into the world, the importance of good manners and an easy, natural address cannot be over-estimated. It is necessary they should note the requirements of social life in the family, in company, and in the street. These things can be taught by informal talks, but we often ignore the necessity, and unless a special time is arranged for such lessons, they are crowded out. We are apt to forget that actions, which seem to us natural because we have seen them performed from the first day we toddled into a room full of people, may have escaped the notice of a blind person. It requires some study to decide how certain actions can be described and taught in the best manner. Mr. Squeers' method of teaching the spelling of "winder" has its advantages in all departments of instruction, and should not be omitted in teaching the etiquette of social life. Make-believe is a delight to little children, and a game in which they personate in turns, the host, hostess, or guests, will lay the foundation of good manners. It is related of Abraham Lincoln that, when he became President, the courtesy and politeness with which he received all who called upon him, created surprise in the minds of those who knew the surroundings of his youth and early manhood. No doubt it was largely due to his kind-

ness of heart, but also to the fact that the master of a back-woods school which he attended was a real gentleman, and did not consider it time wasted to devote a portion of their short term of instruction to lessons in etiquette.

With the older pupils, rules and formal practice have a tendency to produce stiffness, self-consciousness, and artificiality. Let the parties be real parties given by the staff, or one set of pupils to another, with plenty of jollity as well as good manners. Many correspondents suggest social gatherings, to which sighted people not connected with the Institution are invited; or taking the pupils in small numbers to one's friends to join in whist, chess, music, readings, or sport. A few advocate education with the sighted, and take it for granted that the social training will be given at home; but in many cases the home influence is the worst the child could have. I sometimes think it is harder to convince the parents of the child's ability to manage for himself or herself than to train the child.

It was suggested a good book on Social Training should be put in the hands of the pupils, but such a book is not easy to find. I looked over many publishers' catalogues, and examined many books; those on etiquette are numerous, but they do not deal with practical every-day life. There is one book, entitled, *"The Little Book on Health and Courtesy for Boys and Girls," by P. A. Barnett, one of H.M.I., published by Longman, Green & Co., that contains many excellent suggestions. Many useful hints may be obtained from our old friend "Don't."

I feel that I ought to quote the words of two of my blind correspondents on this point. "If rules are learnt to enable a pupil to do this or that under certain specified conditions, the chances are wholly favourable to his performing the required movements in a mechanical and rigid way. Under these conditions he is much too likely to think about this or that detail when in company, therefore, it seems to me

*This book has since been published by the British and Foreign Blind Association.

best to make casual suggestions to pupils, when circumstances arise to call them forth, for the more informal the suggestion, the greater chance of naturalness resulting. What I think is most needed, especially in large Institutions, is more informal intercourse between the blind and the seeing. Looking back on my own experience, it is impressed upon me that pupils in Institutions (and the danger is greater in proportion to the size of the Institution), live too exclusively in the world of the blind. Very likely their outlook intellectually is wider than the average seeing man. They may have first-class instruction, and become acquainted with current events by hearing the daily papers, nevertheless the life outlook is limited, and there is no real approach to the point of view of the seeing. I feel, while acknowledging the excellence of teaching methods now in use, there is still much to be done in a practical direction to develop the personality of the individual student. I am not thinking of mannerisms, but of the development of initiative, the kind of thing which will enable the blind to say 'boo to a goose,' with the full assurance that the goose will beat a hasty retreat. I am sure you will understand in my reference to large Institutions, I do not wish to undervalue the excellent work done, or take up the question in a critical spirit."

Another advocates a special Committee appointed to deal with the matters treated in this paper. "This Committee should comprise a number of blind persons of either sex, drawn from the poorer as well as the well-to-do class. All these should be former pupils of some Institution for the Blind, and most of them should be former pupils of the particular Institution for which the Committee is appointed. It might be necessary to pay travelling expenses to enable them to attend Committee Meetings, but if this is necessary the cost would be a small item, and the experience of past pupils, both during and after school days, would be the

most expert advice which such a Committee could have. Their presence would be specially valuable in details, for it is often the case, that a point which, in the opinion of the seeing, is difficult to the blind, is no difficulty at all, whereas something else which the seeing pass over without a thought, is just a point requiring attention. In the neighbourhood of most Institutions there are generally many seeing friends who take a keen interest in the life inside the school, and some of these might well be added to the Social Training Committee, as they would stand, so to speak, in a neutral position between the Governing Authority, the Staff, and the pupils. The Governing Authority should be represented on this Committee, and their assent should be gained to any revision in the school time-table."

In the Street.—The following suggestions have been made in regard to the street :—

"Observation lessons or walks in town and country in twos and threes, with teacher or some person selected by those in authority, who will describe the various forms of salutation, rules for pedestrians, avoidance of obstacles. This latter should be led up to by ear-training and a development of the sixth sense in school and recreation ground. Pupils should learn to be courteous to other pedestrians, and kindly accept offers in crossing streets and so forth."

They should be cautioned about making themselves conspicuous by loud talking and indiscriminate criticisms in railway carriages or other public places.

The following are from my blind correspondents :—

"One of the most needed things in the street is for a blind man to apologise at once if he collides with anyone. The blind man must stop and crush that phrase, 'Oh, well, he's blind, he couldn't help it.' His sighted friends cannot

do this for him, he must do it for himself; and I think if he is made to realise this, then he will come to see why etiquette is so important."

"In walking with a blind friend, you should indicate the steps or kerb by a slight pressure of the arm just before reaching the edge of the pavement. In entering a train, 'bus, or any narrow space, the blind person should keep behind. Many sighted people, in their desire to see their friend safe, put him in front, which is very awkward for the blind person. In entering a train, if he is put in front, it is impossible for him to tell whether or not the open door is immediately before him, whether he is near enough to mount the step, just how high that step is above the platform, etc.; and often just an inch or two will make all the difference between his entering gracefully or awkwardly. Then having got into the compartment, it is often difficult to discover just where the vacant seat occurs. All these awkwardnesses might be avoided by his sighted friend taking the lead."

If you take the arm of a blind person show him how to hold it to give a firm support, as the tendency is to let the arm hang by the side. If the door of a railway carriage is closed place his hand unobtrusively on the handle of the door, instead of opening it yourself.

Friends in their desire to be of assistance sometimes make locomotion very difficult for the blind. I remember an old lady who used to seize my husband's arm the moment he entered the room, lead him as though he were walking on the brink of a precipice, and hold him with both hands until she had gently deposited him in an arm-chair; she did not realise how uncomfortable it was for him, and how ludicrous they both appeared.

Training in forming a judgment upon the nearness of obstacles or their character is strongly advocated, and

valuable suggestions are given by Mr. Holmes, Superintendent of the "Massachusetts Association for Assisting the Adult Blind":

"What I have acquired myself has been largely stumbled upon, and what I have observed in the more competent of my personal blind friends has never been reduced by them or me to a scientific basis. I believe, however, that it is perfectly possible that it should be so reduced by one giving careful attention to the matter, who was at the same time in the position to draw upon a large fund of facts from a large variety of causes. What I should like to see would be a carefully planned course of instruction in our schools, in the methods which some of our most successful (I use the term here as applied to this particular feature and not necessarily to business or professional attainments) men and women have worked out, and adopted for themselves in their own lives and intercourse with others. If reduced to a systematic and, I might say refining basis by careful study, I see no reason why certain principles could not be deduced which could be inculcated, and then followed up with a large variety of practical experiments and demonstrations, and the whole thing watched and tutored up to the point of bringing the pupils to a much higher state of development, at a much earlier period than they would, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, reach unaided. For example, every child is familiar with the experiment of putting his head into an empty cask and shouting. The resulting reverberation is most astounding. From this experiment to the detection of the presence of a tree, or even the edge of a door, is a very long jump, but it is only a matter of degree, and, if taken in slow stages, any person of at all normal capacity outside the matter of vision can reach the latter point. In the first instance, the head is entirely surrounded by solid matter at short range; in the latter, the object is only on one side, and may be at a much greater

distance—but I repeat it is only a matter of degree. Working along this line, the young, receptive, impressionable mind can, I am sure, be readily brought to the desired point of detecting the presence of objects of any material size, anywhere near the level of the head. How to discover the presence of low objects is a much more difficult task, but I believe that in many cases it can be managed. I even know fellows, totally blind, who aver in all good faith that the sound of their footsteps on the brick side-walk when passing a mud-puddle in the street is perceptibly different to their own ears than when passing a dry patch of earth. I don't think I have ever reached this point of development myself, but I know that those from whom I have received this statement are themselves sincere in their conviction that they receive such an impression, and if the matter can be cultivated on the part of the individual, and brought up to so high a stage of development, surely much can be done by careful instruction for those who have not so carefully trained their own instinct. The greatest trouble to a blind man in getting about alone, especially in our cities, is the tremendous noise of the passing traffic. Early experiments should be tried away from all such distractions. and by degrees the student should be led into greater and greater confusion, in order that he may become accustomed to exercising the newly developed sensibilities under conditions of real life. The direction of the wind is another feature regarding which I feel that we are often too heedless. I once heard of a blind fellow who crossed a large open field, in which there were absolutely no landmarks, by means of a careful observance of the wind. By keeping it blowing against his face from exactly the same direction he was able to steer his course through the field, across which he would undoubtedly have wandered at random if the day had been absolutely still. This particular feat was done on a wager, and, needless to say, the observers who bet against the

accomplishment were much non-plussed. I don't know to what extent this might be worked out as a practical help, but there is certainly something in it worth consideration by anyone who was making a systematic study of the whole subject. I am personally convinced that the ability of the blind to locate objects and successfully navigate amongst them is a combination of hearing and feeling, with a large predominance of the former element, but by no means so insignificant a proportion of the latter that it can be disregarded. I find it more difficult to analyse, and consequently to cultivate, the ability to use what we sometimes term facial perception. In this connection I have, for instance, sometimes been conscious when standing perfectly still and no noise about me, of the nearness of an object which I believe I felt ; I have often verified this impression by making a noise artificially and watching the reverberation. I am inclined to think from my personal experience, although I may be wrong—and I believe others would give a contrary opinion—that the greater scope of usefulness of facial perception lies in close work, and often indoor work. The determination of the position of furniture in the room, the shape and size of the room, its fulness or emptiness of furniture or people, etc., are elements in which I believe facial perception to be of greater relative advantage than hearing or reverberation."

In Church.—I take it for granted that every effort would be made to impress upon our pupils the importance of regular attendance at Church or Chapel, and the cultivation of a reverent spirit. One who had always attended the Church of England would be familiar with its form of worship, but when a blind person is taken to a Service, other than the one to which he is accustomed, it would save much embarrassment if the order were explained to him beforehand. The importance of quiet entry, good position, and if Braille is used as little display as possible, should be men-

tioned. Attention can be secured by making the children thoroughly familiar with the parts of the service in which the congregation join. The Royal Normal College is non-sectarian, the pupils attend seven different Churches, and in all but one Braille copies of the hymns are provided by the ladies of the congregation and placed in the pews. It is related of Sir Robert Peel that when a boy, his father would make him repeat as much as he could remember of the sermon, and when Prime Minister, he ascribed his unique faculty of replying to a succession of arguments in Parliamentary debate to the habit of accuracy and attention so acquired. If we began with the little children by asking for a repetition of the number of the chapter and the verse of the text, and showed them that we were interested by questions in regard to the sermon, we might be able to foster such a habit. In this connection one correspondent added, parenthetically, that in his school-days Sunday was a dull day. The increase in Braille literature and the formation of Lending Libraries now enable schools to provide plenty of embossed books for Sunday reading. Bishop Welldon advised his Harrow boys to make the writing of home letters a part of their Sunday occupation. A pleasant hour can be spent in hearty singing of familiar hymns. At the College the Christian Endeavour Societies hold their meetings before evening prayers.

6. *Cultivation of qualities essential in daily intercourse with others;—*
   - *(a) Courtesy.*
   - *(b) Kindness.*
   - *(c) Consideration for others.*

When we touch on courtesy, kindness and consideration for others we reach the bedrock of character, and for calling forth these and other virtues in our pupils example is more powerful than precept. The usual answer was—exercise care in the selection of your staff. I quote a few :—

"The very highest qualities are necessary, in my judgment in tutors for the blind."

"The whole question is one of securing teachers of the highest moral character, fine of fibre, capable of influencing the young lives around them."

"By unswerving loyalty on the part of the Staff to the head and to each other."

"The blind in very many cases are quick to imitate, and seeing that bad manners and bad behaviour are more quickly imitated than what is really good and refined, I think it cannot too often be impressed upon teachers, especially those who are young, that example is better than precept, and that if they really wish to see good results they must teach by example as well as by precept, paying more attention perhaps to the former than even to the latter. They should themselves at all times be punctual, courteous and well spoken, and I feel certain that if all our teachers will give attention to these matters the moral standard of the school will rise to a high level, to the great advantage of the pupils and the satisfaction of their teachers."

We cannot be too careful in the selection of our staff. Our pupils are isolated by their infirmity, and more dependent than others on those around them. When friendly looks cannot be seen, tactful words become more than ever a necessity; we depend so greatly upon people saying exactly the right thing at the right moment. I count it one of the blessings af the Royal Normal College that for twenty-five years it had for a Matron, Miss Eliza Proctor, whose loyalty to duty, loving sympathy, and unselfishness were an inspiration to the whole household.

Want of consideration for others is sometimes very noticeable in blind people, but it is easy to discover the cause. It is the natural instinct of all with whom they come in contact to help them, and unless they are very unselfish

and thoughtful, the habit of taking help for granted becomes fixed. In many cases their slight attainments are so much praised, they form an undue estimate of their own importance; we often find the same trait in the youngest member of a family. May I quote from the answer of a coterie of blind teachers?

"The tendency of the blind is towards selfishness; they too often take as their rights what are in reality special acts of consideration, and expect far too much from sighted persons. Therefore, in the social training of blind children, special stress should be laid on reciprocal consideration."

Consideration for others can be taught with the entrance of each new pupil; his classmates, or room-mates, should feel responsible for his welfare and happiness; also by giving the older ones charge of the younger, or enlisting help with one whose confidence a teacher has failed to gain. Sometimes the care of a pet animal will call forth a devotion which can be made a stepping-stone to helpfulness towards one's companions. Be sure and ask them to do for you any little thing they can, like carrying a book, bag, umbrella, opening the door, etc. A strong point should be made of their keeping up a regular correspondence with parents or other relatives; also of writing notes of thanks for any favours bestowed by friends, or returning any article that has been lent.

We need training in the art of conduct as in every other art, and by a constant repetition of kind actions, a habit is formed that becomes second nature. All our schools, sighted as well as blind, would do well to take a leaf out of the Educational Code of Japan. In the regulations of their Training Colleges great stress is laid upon training the teachers in all moral virtues. The time-tables in all their schools, except the Universities, allot two hours a week for teaching the principles of morality, and a portion of the

time is given to the practice of etiquette. The lessons in Japanese language, history, geography, etc., are made to furnish material for a solid moral foundation in the nation. On fete days, the Imperial Educational Rescript of 1890, which contains the essence of their moral code, is read in all schools as a solemn ceremony; it inculcates family affection, courtesy, kindness, self-restraint, rectitude, charity towards friends and neighbours, respect for the laws of the country, loyalty, and bravery in the nation's defence.

The teacher should constantly be on the watch, not only to check want of courtesy and unkindness, but also to appreciate the slightest efforts to be helpful. Bring to the notice of your pupils any striking exemplification of these qualities in the daily life of their fellow men; every mine explosion, every great fire, every shipwreck, furnishes examples of heroic self-sacrifice. I hope every school-library has a Braille copy of Professor Drummond's address, "The Greatest Thing in the World." Its careful perusal cannot fail to convince the reader that "the love which suffereth long and is kind," is the secret of true politeness.

7. *What means do you suggest to promote corporate feeling, and counteract the tendency to self-absorption and introspection?*

We sometimes find in blind persons who have been neglected, and also in those who have been made the centre round which all other family interests revolved, a self-absorption that is narrowing and harmful. In the former case, it is accompanied by a morbidness which leads the person to prefer solitude, and to indulge in constant introspection. There is no cure for self-absorption like arousing a healthy interest in some other person and a desire to add to the happiness of one's daily companions. One of the best remedies is to give plenty of work, laying out a varied time-table and holding strictly to its performance. Blind children

are allowed so often to be idle and helpless at home, that they do not appreciate the value of time ; having drifted through childhood, they are content to drift through life. The important habits of punctuality, regularity, and precision, should be cultivated in all arrangements and requirements. The practice of fulfilling all duties at the proper time keeps one alert and drives away depression. The time-table should allow time for reading aloud ; it is important for the older pupils to be kept in touch with daily events through newspapers and magazines. In the selection of books, let biographies and stories that furnish an ideal have a place. If a self-absorbed pupil shows interest in one subject more than another, provide the means of giving more knowledge in that particular branch. With the younger children, gardening, nature study, and the care of pets soon draws them out of self-absorption. There is nothing from which our children derive more pleasure than taking their own flowers to different members of the staff or a companion who is ill. Encourage the formation of reading unions, debating societies, dramatic, dancing and games c ubs, sewing and knitting bees, Christian Endeavour Societies, etc. As far as possible these should be organised and managed by the pupils. Care should be taken that the lethargic are brought into the games and sports. The value of these agencies in promoting corporate life are well stated in the following :—

"Corporate feeling can be fostered by Social Clubs, Glee Clubs, and Literary Societies, under proper supervision ; also by a knowledge of the work done by other schools, and a friendly rivalry between the schools. But from the beginning of his school carecr he should be taught loyalty to his own school, and that only through his own efforts can his school be made the best of its kind."

"Cultivation of school spirit by inculcating pride in her history, in achievements of her alumni, in the good of the

whole as opposed to the good of the individual; these may be accomplished largely through the development of the spirit of the class in gymnastic work, where the class works together, and where the excellency of the work depends on each one doing his share." To translate this into the language of the English schoolboy, each one must learn to "play the game."

"Efforts to the very verge of possibility ought to be made to induce the blind to share in the pursuits of their fellow-men. With regard to the things he cannot see, his imagination ought to be cultivated: in this way nothing human will be alien to him, and he will not suffer from that disease so common to blind men, the belief that he is somehow different from other people. Although provincialism should be discouraged, corporate feeling should be fostered by his being made to see that there are blind people less fortunate than himself, and that some of the best work for the blind has been done by themselves."

The experience gained in presiding over the various Clubs, taking part in Debates and Christian Endeavour Meetings, serving on Reception Committees for entertainments, moving votes of thanks, etc., will give a confidence and ease in speaking, that will be invaluable when our pupils go out into the world.

"It will enable them" "to take a full, active, intelligent part in religious, political, municipal, and social affairs."

All my correspondents dwell upon the importance of that intercourse between blind and sighted people, which has been dealt with in Social Training. One urges "Wherever feasible, educate them wholly if possible, if not, partly, with sighted children, joining in their games, etc."

8. *Importance of courteous Behaviour and Good Conduct to the future success and happiness of our pupils. Illustrations.*

When one goes into the world, good manners, pleasant words, and ready tact play an important part in one's success or failure. A little talent and plenty of tact will go a long way towards securing employment, while the reverse spells failure. For a blind man seeking work much depends upon first impressions, and unless the applicant shows by his appearance, manner and conversation that he possesses the social qualities which will enable him to fulfil the duties of the position to which he aspires, he will meet with a blank refusal. A good address often opens the door to opportunity. If we expect the blind to secure remunerative employment it must be through their market value, and because they inspire confidence. If an organist is awkward and helpless, we cannot wonder people refuse to give him a trial. A lady will think twice before she will continue to employ a pianoforte tuner who is untidy, or whose manner is rude. My correspondents have stated the case so fully I again refer to them.

"The most important point to my mind is that one with little talent or ability will succeed through sheer force of personality and likeableness of character, if I may use the term; his society is tolerated or even sought by those in a better social position, although he may err in point of etiquette. In a word, as I often say to young men and women, a pound of good manners and an ounce of ability will, in most cases, carry him further on towards success and happiness than an ounce of good manners and a pound of ability."

"Any blind individual expecting to succeed in life must have this training, and must learn to conduct himself in view of society, and I think the best way in which he can secure this is to live with seeing people who love him enough to be true, to correct his bad habits, and to see that he does not become self-absorbed. A blind man's wife, who is sufficiently level-headed to see beyond her love for him, is the best asset

he could possibly have. In answering this question, you see that my mind has gone beyond and has reached outside a school. There is no doubt that in the school the importance of good social training and conduct should be constantly held up to the pupils, and such instruction as is possible be given to them. They must be taught the advantage of wearing good clothes and keeping themselves clean; of eschewing rather than chewing tobacco; of making themselves a really acceptable member of society. It is only the consummate genius who, blind, succeeds in spite of his bad training. My illustrations are all in my mind, and are individuals who prove the truth of these remarks; to describe them would be wearisome. We simply can point to this and that individual who has gone into the world and has made himself a useful member of society—has 'succeeded' as we say—and in practically every instance it is the individual who has taken care about these things of which you are to write."

"Experience goes to show that whereas bad manners on the part of a sighted individual prejudice the welfare of that particular individual, bad manners on the part of a blind individual tend to prejudice the welfare of the blind as a class."

"It should be the determination of every blind person to raise his class—he should thoroughly realise that any misconduct of his will prejudice sighted people not merely against himself but the whole class, and that strict adherence to the laws of uprightness with a resolute determination to overcome obstacles will do more than anything else to remove prejudice and place the blind on an equal footing with their sighted friends."

Instances were given of talented pupils, who might have been a credit to themselves and an honour to their school, but they were dragged down by low aims and bad manners, till they sank into abject poverty. On the other hand,

many blind persons were mentioned who, although they lost their sight in childhood, became eminent not only in their own profession or business, but also active members of the community in which they lived; some of them are in this room, but I will go farther afield and not cause them embarrassment by mentioning their names.

A friend across the Atlantic writes: "I have in mind a young man blessed with an easy, cheerful manner that wins friends wherever he goes. He is never forward, always interested in the person speaking to him, talks well, but has the gift of silence. When he finished his course in the School for the blind, he took a course at the Law School in connection with the University, and after gradnation, went back to a little country village. He made friends with every lawyer in the nearest large town and was elected attorney for his county, an office he still holds." Another says "One blind man who has frequently visited the Board of Education in New York City, has done more to prove to those with whom he has come in contact, that one can be blind, and yet take his share of the world's work, than years of talking on the part of those who are educating the Blind."

I have in mind two, whose wise parents laid in childhood and youth, a foundation which led to happiness for themselves, and blessings for their class. When Elizabeth Gilbert lost her sight at the age of three, the parents decided she was to be treated exactly like her sisters; if she entered a room they were not to give her a chair, she was to find one for herself. Her father was specially anxious she should be like others at the table, and when the children went in to dessert, it was Elizabeth who sat by her father's side and poured out his glass of wine. She was educated with her sisters, and later she took part in all the duties and pleasures of the family circle. After the dear sister married, who had

been her intimate companion, all joy seemed to have gone out of her life, till that sister suggested to Elizabeth she should give her time and money for the benefit of the blind. You all knew the sequel, how she founded the "Association for the welfare of the Blind." The girl trained in childhood to be self-helpful, resourceful, and unselfish, grew into a woman who was surrounded by friends, enthusiastic in her cause, and ready to serve that cause to the utmost.

The other is Mr. William Auchincloss Arrol, of Glasgow, who has recently passed away. When he lost his sight at the age of ten, his mother thought he must be shielded from all care and trouble, but his father said "No, William must join his brothers in all their studies and sports." After finishing his University career, he entered his father's business firm, taking charge of the correspondence. One of a large family of brothers and sisters, he always took his share in all social duties. Those who have enjoyed the hospitality of his own home, and have seen the ease with which he performed the duties of host, whether for a few friends or for a large dinner party, will realise that a blind man can be perfect in all matters of etiquette. He always took an active part in the civic, political, and religious life of the community in which he lived, and aided all efforts to improve the condition of the blind, in Glasgow and the West of Scotland.

Among our former pupils, there is no more conspicuous example of success than Mr. Philip Layton, of Montreal. When he landed in Canada in 1881, his only capital was a gentlemanly manner, thorough training, indomitable perseverance, and upright character. To-day he has one of the largest pianoforte warehouses in Montreal on the principal street of the city, the site and building costing one hundred and thirty thousand dollars. But his soul is not wrapped up in commercialism. Three years ago he began

a campaign to secure assistance for the blind in the province of Quebec, in which he was joined by a number of other blind men in the city. By the end of the year an influential Committee had been formed, a small workshop for adults opened, and a Lending Library started. The ultimate object was the establishment of a progressive Blind School for the Protestant children of the Province, the Catholic children being taught by a Sisterhood. For this purpose it was necessary to raise one hundred thousand dollars. Having secured sixty thousand dollars through donations and a successful bazaar, Mr. and Mrs. Layton organised what is known in Canada as a Tag-day. It is a Hospital Saturday, with various amusing additions which I cannot take time to describe. It was conducted by the ladies with all the force and strategy of a battle—in fact, the head-lines of the papers announced "Montreal invaded by twelve hundred ladies." The fund was brought up to ninety thousand dollars, the last five thousand dollars is promised, and the success of the project is assured.

The many blind men and women who have won their way to positions, creditable to themselves and useful to those around them, should inspire our pupils with a belief that each one can do something to remove from the mind of the public the idea that the blind are a helpless class. To overcome the prejudice that prevails against their employment they must add to their technical, literary, or musical attainments, a manly bearing, gentlemanly conduct, and upright character.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Siddall, of Rochdale, will open the discussion.

MR. SIDDALL: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—Before commencing any remarks in answer to Lady Campbell's excellent paper, I think that, on behalf of the people assembled here, and especially on behalf of the blind, I may say that we thank her most heartily. I believe that no better person, nor one who is more interested in the blind at large, could have been chosen to take the position of compiler of this paper.

Now I suppose in the first place I ought to explain my presence here. Mr. Marston was the chosen speaker for the post which I am now taking as opener of the discussion. I am heartily sorry that he is not able to be with us, and I may say to the Chairman that if he considers himself to be a brave man to take the place of the Countess of Meath, I think that for me to take the place of one of our most eloquent speakers, and especially when it is remembered that I am one of the blind people who under this paper are brought forward for criticism, I feel quite justified in looking upon myself as a hero.

In the first place, do the blind people here think that Lady Campbell has been rather giving us a hot time. (Cries of "No"). Well I am very pleased to hear it, because I do not; I don't think she has been hot enough. I should like to say a lot of things, but time will not permit me, and I had not the opportunity of studying the paper until late last night.

What is true kindness to the blind person? I believe it is to point out the greatest faults he has—no matter how much the process may hurt. That is, I thimk, what we all believe, but do we do it? I do not think we do. For example many of the faults which Lady Campbell has referred to in character, in action, and in speech, have been present in this Conference, and have been noticed by myself and by many other blind people. Have we pointed them out to our blind fellows? I say we have not, and I say it is because we dare not. Still I say it is cowardice on our part, and I think it is our duty to do so. If anyone can find fault with me, I hope they will at once. There is of course some excuse for the blind people falling into certain mannerisms, yet they should none the less be corrected. For example, there are few blind people who use a handkerchief correctly, few raise their hats correctly. It is not that we do not wish to be correct, but simply through the lack of sight which would enable us to imitate others. I think that those points and others that Lady Campbell has mentioned should be

taught at schools and institutions, and not only there but by the parents at home first and perhaps last.

Another point that Lady Campbell laid stress upon was "brains versus manners." Well, I believe, as Lady Campbell pointed out, the manners will come out on top.

Now there is one thing (and I think only one thing) in Lady Campbell's paper, to which I can call up any opposition in my mind. Oh yes, I am wrong—there are two. I think she was complaining of the length of her paper; but I fancy I should have erred in the same direction. But the point to which I raise the most opposition is that of the land-marks at the Royal Normal College. I do distinctly object to this principle, because a blind person having had these at the College, will feel that they are necessary in after-life, whereas had they not been there he would have found out some land-marks for himself.

Now I mentioned that in my opinion mothers of blind children should teach them their manners. I will go further and say that I think, whenever the opportunity presents itself, blind people should instruct the parents of blind children with regard to the treatment of the latter. There are many parents who would gladly bring up their blind children in the way they ought to be brought up, if they only knew how to do it; and I believe one of the ways in which this can be improved is through those who occupy positions like myself—that is, teachers of the blind. One of the first duties of a teacher of the blind of any district should be to teach the parents how to bring up the children in the way they should go. I believe that if that plan were carried out we should have fewer defective blind children. I could point to cases in my own town, where if the parents had taken charge of their children as they ought to have done, the children would not have developed into defective blind children.

Mannerisms in blind people—and especially those at school—could easily be checked while the children are at play, even better than while in school. A child in school somehow feels that respectability of manners is expected of him, but during his hours of play he is liable to forget all this. Let the teacher overlook the children's play, and he will get them as they really are; correct them at such times and I think the lesson will be more lasting than if corrected in class. Nevertheless, I am in favour of class teaching in manners also.

I agree in every way with Lady Campbell's remarks about manners at table, although for the early part of the present generation I think there may be some excuse. As a matter of fact, in this we show the greatest progress that has been shown in any subject, for when we

come to consider the manner in which a table is now laid at an Institution for the Blind, and compare it with the manner in vogue only a few years back, we shall find a considerable difference. I think this speaks very well for the Committees of the different Institutions in this country. They appear to be commencing to understand what a blind person is, what he wants, and when the Committees of the Institutions understand this there is some hope for the public.

Now about the manners of the blind when in the street. I quite agree that blind people should perhaps be more thoughtful than they are. It is a very common thing for a blind person to collide with some one, and to pass on without the slightest apology.

The next thing that I come to in my notes (of which I have only been able to make a few) is what I style "P. Bism" in the streets. "P.B." was used at Worcester to signify the "Poor Blind." I refer in this case to the blind man who has the happy idea in his head that he is very good at finding his own way in the streets. I have purposely taken a journey with some of those blind men, and the method generally adopted is to go a few yards, ask a person the way; that person shows him a little way, and then he asks another. I do not think that is fair to the public, but you would be surprised if you knew how many of the blind do this—perhaps not to a great extent, but more or less.

Now a word with regard to leading the blind. Here again I notice a marked improvement in the public, especially those who have to do with the blind. I believe it was in Edinburgh that I announced to the principals of institutions that I only knew of three who really knew how to lead a blind person. I am glad to say that number has gone up. The leading of the blind is a very important question, there is no doubt, and I am very pleased that Lady Campbell has laid stress upon it. There is one hint which might be given to the sighted, and that is, where it is possible, let the blind person take *your* arm, so that if necessity arises (for instance going through a narrow passage or a narrow doorway) it will allow the blind person room to fall behind a sighted man, while if the sighted person takes the arm of the blind man he will have to push him forward and have no control over him.

With regard to what is written in Lady Campbell's paper about training the blind by the sixth sense to enable them to move in the street or in the house, I believe there is a great deal more in this than some people think. (Cries of "No.") As I hear opposition I am going on with the subject. I have personally been tested in places that I did not know, and on guessing the distance from a wall as being ten yards, it

was found when measured to be exactly nine and a half. I have on several occasions told a person that we were passing a door or window, the existence of which I did not previously know of. So I say there is something in it, though the sense is not given so strongly to all blind people. I believe it can be cultivated. I am glad to find that I am going to raise some dispute on one point.

Now high class teachers are undoubtedly absolutely necessary if you are going to turn out high class pupils in the point of manners and good behaviour. When children come, as they often do, from homes where good manners are unknown, how can they learn if they have not someone over them whom they can imitate, and from whom they can learn good manners?

What Lady Campbell says about the blind taking things for granted which are really ceded to them as privileges, I believe to be very true. We have a trick of doing this, and I am afraid this trait has a tendency to grow. I have particularly noticed it here in this Conference in a few cases, and surely if it is noticeable here, where there are assembled those blind people who are naturally of the more educated class, what shall we find in the other class of blind people who are not so well brought up?

I think that public speaking by the blind should be encouraged at every school and institution, and in this matter at least I am inclined to think we may blow our own trumpet; for, taking the blind people who have spoken at this Conference, I fancy they will compare well with sighted speakers. I am of opinion that those blind speakers who have come from the Worcester College, owe the greater part of their capability for speaking on a platform to a class at Worcester which we called the Declamation Class, in which each senior pupil was expected to get up a declamation on any subject he chose, and to give it to the blind people of his own College. He was expected to speak for twenty minutes at least. A vote of thanks was then proposed by the speaker at the next declamation, and seconded by the speaker who had given the one before it, so that he was criticised by his own fellow students, and if he got off too easily the head master put in his spoke.

Now with regard to public judgment on the blind, I would like to heartily agree with what Lady Campbell has said about the judgment of blind people by the public at large. It is very hard on the blind that because one does something wrong the whole should suffer, because this is not carried out in other cases. This is a fact, however, and should be borne in mind.

Now I think that we might put together a series of "Don'ts" for

blind people; I will not do that, however, but will simply conclude by saying, "Don't be an ostrich with your head in a hole, and think that because you can see no one, no one can see you."

Dr. Washington Ranger (London): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—It is no slight indication, no slight evidence of the increased interest in the concerns of the blind, that we should be occupied here this morning with this excellent paper of Lady Campbell with regard to the manners of the blind.

"Manners maketh ye man," said William of Wykeham many centuries ago. This is the motto of that great seat of learning in Oxford—New College—and I thoroughly believe it. I also believe that a blind man has a varied and a splendid equipment with which to start life—an equipment sufficient for the majority of blind men to succeed; but that success very largely depends on the question of his manners, and therefore I think our paper to-day, though very striking and very significent on the question of progress in the interests of the blind is among the most important we have yet considered.

Now I was told at breakfast this morning that I was too hard on the sighted. That arose out of this proposition—that a very large proportion of the bad manners of the blind is due to the bad manners of the sighted, and especially to the way in which they treat the blind. Now no man is second to me in my gratitude for, and appreciation of, the goodwill of the sighted to the blind; it is a grand inheritance, and is the one thing which makes success possible. Therefore in the criticisms I am about to make on my sighted brethren I hope it will not be inferred that I am less thankful to them—and especially to my sighted sisters—for the unstinted goodwill and practical help which they always accord to me. Having said that, let me pass on to point out a few things.

Lady Campbell told us of the sort of treatment that Sir Francis sometimes receives; and ending up, she says, by "gently depositing him in an easy chair." I must congratulate Sir Francis; I have been thrown across the arm of an easy chair, and after stumbling over about three ottomans I have scarcely known where I was—and then I am to be complained of because of awkward manners. What do you expect in the way of manners from a blind man who has had placed before him a choice morsel of salmon, consisting mainly of bone, lumps of skin, and the oily portions of the fish? And he is expected to enjoy himself and carry on that portion of the meal decorously. What are you to say about the manners of a blind man who is brought up to the platform by a porter who has never before guided anyone who could

not see, and in passing those posts that secure the platform it is ten to one that he collides against the pillar, and then with his bruised shins he is expected to be elegant.

Then take the question of raising your hat in the street. Your companion probably says, " Mr. and Mrs. Simpson are coming " ; and you say, " Yes, I am very glad to see them." You are taking off your hat when your friend tells you they are on the other side of the street, a hundred yards off, and won't be here for some time yet. That is an experience I have had again and again.

I will say for the benefit of my sighted brethren that the dominating rule in the treatment and assistance which they so unstintingly give to the blind, is that they should touch or handle them as little as possible, and when they have to do so at all, to do it in the lightest possible manner. Just give him the smallest indication of how to go ; touch him on the shoulder to prevent him running into danger, or something of that kind. But as a rule *tell* him what do, where to go, and unless he is a very exceptional blind man he will manage the rest.

Now I will pass from this question, because I am really very grateful to the sighted for all that they do for us.

Let me pass on to this awful bogie of the sixth sense. Those illustrations which Mr. Siddall gave are to my mind self-evident of the falsity of the supposition. The whole secret of it is this : if a blind man intelligently keeps his senses alive, and is on the alert, he can avoid all these collisions and become aware of all these various things, if he will only go at a moderate pace and be on the qui vive; but if his mind is five thousand miles away, and he is thinking of something else, suddenly he goes bang into a tree. If he is really on the alert, and will go at a steady pace, and walk in the middle of the pavement, everybody moves without knowing of his blindness, and he will become aware of all obstacles, except perhaps those things which lie not more than six, eight, or nine inches from the ground. It is very difficult to cope with these, but if his pace is not too great he will be able to avoid even them.

We are all familiar with the three balls of a bagatelle table—the red, black, and white. Now I have had these put into my hand many times to prove that a blind man can tell colour. The truth is that the ball takes the dye less well in red and better in black, and of course in the white ball there has been no dye at all. You touch them once and you can afterwards follow them for five or six times, but after that you cannot tell them at all. But that is no test that a blind man can tell colours. Take again the question of taste—beef and mutton ; you can

tell them three, four, or five times; it is the same with sherry and port but you cannot tell them when you come to the sixth or seventh time." (Laughter). Ladies and Gentlemen, I assure you this was quite unintentional.

Now let me pass for a moment to the great advantages which a blind man possesses over a sighted one, but the value of those is in proportion to his manners. The two great assets which he possesses over the sighted is, first, facility of access. There can hardly be found a man or woman in Europe who will not give a blind man an interview; and I want you to consider for a moment what the sighted people of Europe would give if they could make sure of a personal interview. A blind man can almost always get one; it is an asset which he has, and a very valuable one, but it is one which he will largely lose the advantage of if his manners are not what they ought to be. The other great asset I refer to is the grand inheritance of the blind—the goodwill of the sighted, which is infinitely greater than one sighted person possesses to another. The blind man possesses this to such an extent that with those two assets he can practically make his way through life.

Let me sum up the fivefold equipment of the blind:—

(1) He wants to learn a profession or business.

(2) He wants a sighted partner in some form or another (he need not marry the partner).

(3) He has got the facility of access to bring his business to fruition and to find his market.

(4) He has the goodwill of the mass of human creatures.

And if he has the fifth—good manners—the vast majority of the blind can make a success of life, and there need not be this talk about the semi-tutelage of the blind by Government, Associations or Institutions.

Mr. Illingworth (Manchester): I would like to suggest that Lady Campbell's paper should be printed, and supplied to blind Institutions and teachers.

I am with Mr. Siddall in regard to the question of landmarks, but the marks at Norwood are not quite so numerous as one might think.

I wish to speak particularly on the subject of mannerisms in young blind children. I think teachers ought to take note of many of these faults—twitching of the face and fingers, body swinging, etc. These are mostly traceable, in my opinion, to spinal nerve trouble, and although I will not attempt to deal here with the details of the physiological side of the question, I have no hesitation in giving you the benefit of my twenty-five years experience. Some of you perhaps do

not know what a spinal board is. It is simply a flat board about 6ft. x 2ft., with a slight hollow at one end for the head. The board is laid on the floor with the head end slightly raised. The pupil lies on his back, with his arms by his sides and legs extended, for about half an hour each day. In a few months time the evil habits disappear. This is no hypothesis, but a positive fact. The pupil is under the eye of a teacher all the time, and may even be taking part in a lesson, which is preferable to lying in a room alone. It is probable that some here may doubt the efficacy of this method of dealing with such a common defect, but I can assure you that if you are in earnest with it and follow it up simultaneously (this is not an Irishism) by filling up the child's leisure with kindergarten or other occupations, you are almost sure to succeed. Dr. Watts' old lines, "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do," were never more true than in the case of a blind child, and that is why we ask our school teachers to take out of school supervision in preference to mere attendants; as the latter not understanding the peculiar movements, etc., cannot be expected to remedy them. That is all I have to say on this subject, but I felt that, having gained considerable experience in such matters, I would like others to have the benefit of it.

I would have liked time to reply to Dr. Ranger with reference to the "Sixth Sense bogey." I hope, however, that I may have the opportunity sometime in the future of bringing him into contact with some positive results which cannot be traced to anything else. What other sense could tell a totally blind young man, sitting in a railway carriage, absolutely stationary, that outside, in a field about twenty yards beyond the hedge of the railway embankment, there was standing a trellis-work of iron? The train was quite still, and he said to me "Is there an iron bridge over here, or close by?" I said "No." He said "There seems to be something."

DR. RANGER: Was the window open?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The window was shut. When I looked carefully I saw one of those common trellis windmills standing there—just the tower, nothing more. My blind friend said he *felt* there was something of the kind there, and he knew the exact direction. Both windows were shut.

MR. W. H. DIXON (Oxford): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I thank Lady Campbell for the paper to which we have had the pleasure of listening this morning, and I personally have received one hint when she said that a person ought so to stand that

ears, shoulders, hips, knees and ankles are all at the same angle. Now it is very frank of me, but I do say that this advice will be useful to me.

I do not intend to speak my full time, but I must take exception to the assertion made by some that a blind person ought necessarily to wear spectacles, I think certainly that some blind persons ought to do so, but when I put the question to a friend of mine he said "For goodness sake don't advertise the fact that you are blind." He said "The reason why I have so much admiration for a certain blind person I know is that he seems to go about as if he did not know that he was blind. For goodness sake don't advertise the fact."

Now with regard to the help of sighted people. When kind and well-meaning seeing persons (I think "sighted" ungrammatical) tell you about ten miles before you get to the place, that there is a step; you put your foot out long before the proper time and when you really get to the step you probably come down with a bang, and you do not feel very happy.

I do hope that we are not going to spend a lot of time on the discussion of the "sixth sense," because I think it is rather a question of psychology than of the subject with which we are concerned this morning. But I do think that the blind ought to be allowed to use common parlance in their conversation. People ought not to think it strange if I say "I am going to see so and so." Frequently one seeing person says to another "Fancy, he is going to see." As a matter of fact I am going to call on the person. And, in the same way, if I am going to "see" Hamlet, it simply means that I am going to get as much pleasure as I can get out of it, because we know that the worst plays are those which depend mostly on spectacular effect.

I should like to say something with regard to the attitude of blind men towards "blind" questions, and I hope this is to the point. There are two extreme attitudes. Most of us are in danger of becoming rather provincial; we get so absorbed in the questions which interest us that we do not always take the trouble to find out the ordinary events that are passing around us. To my mind, however, that is not the worst feature. Because there is a class of blind persons (fortunately very small) with just the opposite fault; they seem ashamed of the fact that they are blind, and this is a very different thing from not wishing to advertise it. Such men do not want to meet other blind people, are not at all interested in "blind" questions, and keep out of the way of such things as much as possible. That is not only selfish, but it does not even achieve the purpose for which the attitude is taken up; it does not give people the idea that a person of this kind is broad-minded, but

it gives them the idea that he is self-absorbed in his little self instead of in his big self.

I have been asked by a member of this audience to mention that the magazine, "Comrades," gives blind children all kinds of hints on behaviour, and is very good in matters of that kind. Now I hope I have contributed something to the discussion.

Mr. Guy Campbell (Norwood): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I have been asked by some of my blind friends to try and spend half the time allotted to me in elucidating a little in detail what I meant by "platform etiquette" the other day. Many came and asked me to try and make an opportunity during the discussion on Lady Campbell's paper to explain this matter.

First of all let me say that, as a matter of after-care, it ought to be the duty of Institution Committees—I am dealing particularly with the musicians—to see that those who appear in public are properly dressed for their part. You know very well indeed that if you are taking part as a seeing person in a concert, you wear evening dress, and yet how often do you find some of our most brilliant blind people attempting to co-operate with seeing artistes in a jacket suit? You may be told, "he cannot afford anything better." Then I maintain this—that the Institution which has given the boy or girl, or man or woman, such a training, should see to it that his poverty is not a bar to his success, and must supply him with the necessary, proper, and correct apparel. This is an absolute necessity if you want that person to get other engagements. Now particular care ought to be exercised in the matter of the dress of women. When I say they should have evening dress, I do not mean a Tetrazzini gown, or an Albani affair, but a fit and appropriate dress. Of course evening dress in the case of men requires no definition. Tuners, too, should be dressed for their part. Very often they, go in a hybrid mixture—a coat of one colour, a waistcoat of a second brown boots, and other eccentricities of attire, which form a mixture sufficient to make any real lady think there is too much discord in appearance to obtain concord on her piano. The Institution authorities should see that the tuners are properly dressed, and they should wear a tie in most instances of a dark colour. The tuners should also be told that brown boots, a frock coat, and a straw hat are not the correct thing.

Now coming to the platform. I said that it should be the duty of the seeing person to manage so that the blind performer is *nearest* to the audience. If that is properly done two things should be observed;

if I am coming on to the platform from the left, in order that the blind person should be in his proper place, I should so lead him that he would have my left arm, and I should have his right; then tell the blind person where the audience is situated.

Having settled the question of taking the blind performer on to the platform, we come to the question of bringing him off. Follow the same rule: if you gave him the left arm to lead him on to the platform, then you should give him your right arm when bringing him off, so that he is still *next* to the audience.

With regard to his own conduct. He arrives on the platform, and wants to know whether to bow. If he is received with a large mead of applause, before he commences, by all means let him make a slight bow. When he has finished his performance, if he is not the accompanist, he should most certainly bow again. Now here is the important part, about which so many people make a mistake: care should be taken to be modest, and not aggressive; consequently the performer should get up in such a way that the piano stool is between the audience and himself, to denote humility and thankfulness. If he gets up on the other side he becomes aggressive, and he must avoid even the appearance of such things; therefore, in retiring from the piano he must try to see that he is behind his own music stool before making his bow.

I think I have said enough with regard to these matters, but there is just one other. The rule always is that the accompanist must be taken to the instrument before the soloist is brought forward; nothing is more embarrassing than the contrary. There should be a second person, if possible, to bring forward the soloist.

You may say, "All this is very well if the seeing people understand about these things." I say that if you know that the seeing do not know about these things, you, as a blind person, should ask such questions as, "Where is the audience? Are they on the left or the right? If my audience is on my left I want you to give me your left arm, etc.

Now there are just two or three other things I would like to say, and they are in reference to teeth, smoking, and glasses.

I think the blind hardly realise how often the care of the teeth means an immense improvement in the appearance of a person, as well as a great comfort in actual health. Many have acquired the habit of smoking, but with all smokers, unless they take pains to prevent it, a discoloration of the teeth takes place, which is not at all pleasant; they should be careful to use some dentifrice to put that right. If you are a singer, and have lost some of your front teeth, go to a good dentist and get some false ones. There is nothing more unpleasant than to see a

singer with two or three teeth missing from the upper row. I do beg of my friends to take care of their teeth, to cleanse them properly, and to see that the portion of the mouth which is visible to the audience, is quite complete.

With regard to smoking, blindness has its limitations, and there is no doubt you often have to give up smoking because it will interfere with your business. I can assure tuners that the habit of cigarette smoking during the day, with the constant dropping of the ash on the clothes, is by no means a passport to a lady's good opinion. The smoking of cigarettes and cigars should be left till the end of the day's work.

The question of glasses is a difficult one. Somebody said, "Do not emphasise or accentuate your blindness." But it is surely better to have glasses (not necessarily dark ones) if the person is disfigured. If the disfiguration is not very bad it is not necessary to have very dark glasses, but simply enough to show his deficiency in sight.

One of the speakers referred to the question of taking a blind person through a door, and I thought his remarks were very good. We often have to take two blind people through a door, and in that case it is best to take the arm of one and put him in front, and let the other take your arm and follow behind.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am afraid we must cut down the time of the speeches now. There are so many speakers.

MR. H. C. PREECE (London): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I am not going to waste time by discussing all the charms of Lady Campbell's paper, for they really—as I have not read them previously—appal me. All I can say from the point of view of a blind man is, that whatever our vices may be, I believe that enduring monuments will be carried down to future ages of a blind man, assisted by his wife, who have left behind a permanent record of their influence on the welfare and happiness of the blind. I am not in a position to discuss all the various subjects with which Lady Campbell has dealt; I am rather going to look at the question as a whole. After all, all your schools and institutions are preparing the blind for competition with the sighted. Of their existence in society and the outside world, I have perhaps a peculiarly wide experience having been blind only four years, and before that time as a man of the world in London I have had a good deal of experience of life in society, and I can assure you that the great thing which society will not stand is swank and conceit. I hope you

will allow me to say that the great fault of the blind in society is self-satisfaction—almost amounting in many cases to self-conceit. I refer of course to none who are here present, and I am quite in the position of Dr. W. G. Grace who used to say frequently at luncheon during cricket matches he had never seen better cricket in his life. But the more I go about the world—and I go about a great deal as a professional lecturer and a man who preaches throughout London as Travelling Secretary for the British and Foreign Blind Association—the more impressed do I become with the general view that the blind are more conceited than the sighted. I want our schools to warn their pupils against this very serious fault. Time after time when I have been at a concert where blind artistes have been performing, I have heard it said that it was such a pity they were so conceited. Conceit earns a lack of sympathy particularly from the working man, and we have great difficulty in getting his sympathy as it is. I know of a case of blind girls who simply revolve round each other in an atmosphere of mutual admiration. I also know a blind man in London to whom most men will not talk because of his conceit, and another gifted blind man whom I know in London was thrown over by his girl for the simple reason that she could not stand his "swank." What are the reasons for this general self-conceit? I do not know. I leave that to Lady Campbell to find out and to guard against in her teaching. But often the conceit of the blind is caused by the misguided kindness of the sighted. You cannot go and do a simple thing without being told how wonderful you are. I had a week-end last week, and was sitting in bed shaving myself; and a fellow in the same room said "What a wonderful chap you are." I went down stairs, and he stood at the bottom and said "What a marvel you are to get down alone." But the beauty of it all is, they do not mean these things. They say it out of a desire to be kind to us, and help us on the road of life, and though it reflects the greatest credit on their hearts, it reflects the meanest credit on their intelligence. Then again, the blind as a rule have not the disadvantage of getting married—which is the best known remedy for conceit. There was a time when our wives revolved round their husbands in a state of admiration; but with the wider education and the freedom of women, they have learnt to treat the home as part of the world, and not as a sort of temple in which to worship the epicurean God.

What is self-conceit? Look what harm it does. If an employer has to decide between a blind girl who is conceited and a sighted one who is not, you know very well which he is going to choose. I ask what is self-conceit? It is a sort of impersonal Winston Churchill which

builds gates across the side streets leading to the main highways of the mind and prevents the free ingress of those new ideas and impressions which are essential for its progressive development. What you want to do is to get a kind of mental-self-critical-analysis, which you must send every morning like a watering cart along your brain, to remove those conceits and prejudices which block the way. Of course one might say a very great deal, but I am afraid I have had an eye-opener this morning. My wife kept nudging me while Lady Campbell was reciting my many faults, and finally when she said that the worst of blindness after all was selfishness, I got a violent nudge in the ribs, and when I get home I shall be sent off to Norwood to be taught to have the manners of Lord Chesterfield, the elegance of Beau Brummel, and to come back the glass of fashion and the mould of form.

Well, Lady Campbell, if it is true that the blind are too conceited, it is a serious handicap in their employment, their popularity and their capacity to get married, and I hope you will do all you can in the Institutions to guard your people against it. Give your people weapons of offence as much as you like, but give them also weapons of defence to fight against self-conceit.

I have to thank your Ladyship for your delightful paper, which I hope may have some practical effect.

Mr. Stone (Edinburgh): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—We have not only had a very able paper from Lady Campbell, but also a very interesting object lesson from Mr. Guy Campbell, and a foretaste from Mr. Preece of the humour we may expect to-night.

The first thing I had down in my notes has been anticipated by Mr. Illingworth. I had intended to advise the heads of schools that they should put copies of Lady Campbell's paper into the hands of their senior pupils, as a sort of chart of good manners. I think in making this suggestion I am speaking in a very disinterested spirit, for the Braille paper was printed by Mr. Stainsby.

When I first went to West Craigmillar, after having been head master of a School where there were four hundred seeing children, I had expected to find a great many mannerisms and bad habits among the blind. I did not, however, find these to any great extent, and I attribute this fact to two reasons—first to the judicious care, the kindness and motherliness of our admirable Lady Superintendent, Miss Henderson, who, I am sorry to say, cannot be with you owing to illness, much as she desired to attend this Conference. In the second place I attribute it to the admirable organisation left to me by my friend

Mr. Illingworth. There is not much time to go very deeply into the subject, but I feel very strongly upon the question of nervous habits. I am not in favour of constantly calling the attention of children to these points; the continual use of "don't" I believe to be harmful. I believe that the only true solution of the difficulty is the treatment of these bad habits from a medical point of view. On that point I disagree with Mr. Illingworth. I believe that the good state of the children at West Craigmillar was due more to the running track than to the back-board.

Now about table etiquette. Mr. Pine told us he was a believer in the lodging-out system. We have tried this plan in Edinburgh, but are now departing from it, for proper attention cannot be given to society manners, nor can the pupils be properly looked after and supervised while in lodgings.

Mr. Siddall spoke of public speaking; I think this should have an important place in the curriculum of all schools for the blind. We have had a debating society at West Craigmillar for a number of years, and at least once a year we have a visit from the children of a neighbouring school, and then a joint debate takes place. On these occasions the leaders prepare their papers, but the others speak from notes only.

I am afraid I do not admire the Japanese custom quite as much as Lady Campbell. I am a believer in indirect teaching. I believe that if you get into the school a thoroughly good tone from the highest to the lowest point, you have really solved the difficulty.

I was asked about blind teachers by the Superintendent of a certain Institution; he inquired whether I did not find that the partially seeing children take advantage of the blind teachers. I have never found this to be the case. Good tone will prevent that, and if you get a tone of kindliness and consideration in the school you can largely dispense with more formal teaching.

Miss Lily Bell (Norwood): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—There are just one or two points to which I would like to refer One, the necessity of *repeating* suggestions or corrections to the pupils. I do not think that those who see can realise in what an isolated little world a blind person lives. Children who are sighted, and grown-up people too, learn much from watching others, but those of us who do not see are obliged to depend very much upon intuition, so that the less fortunate ones may make many mistakes if not told. Therefore, I do not quite agree with what Mr. Stone said in regard to not having lessons in etiquette; I think they are most necessary. When taking soup, for instance, however much one may respect the head of the table,

it is necessary that the pupil should be told that the proper way is to take it from the side of the spoon. Without being at all indifferent, it is very easy to forget and to lapse into an old habit, and it is therefore necessary for those who are sighted to constantly correct mistakes and suggest proper methods.

Some people hesitate to tell or correct the blind, fearing they will resent the suggestions or corrections, but this of course depends very much upon how they are made. If kindly given they will generally be gratefully received. I was surprised, even myself, the other day at a little girl whom I had corrected. When I pointed out to her why she had made a certain mistake, she said, very sweetly, "Thank you for explaining my mistake."

2. Then in regard to the selection of one's clothes, it is, I think, most important that the blind should take Dr. Ranger's suggestion of "partnership." They may know generally what is worn, and what suits them, but not always; so it is very necessary for them to consult sighted friends upon whose judgment they can rely. It may be some time, however, before they find such, but they will soon learn upon whose taste they can depend by the passing criticisms received; and when they have found such a friend they should follow implicitly his or her advice. The same article that looks very well on one person may not be at all becoming to another. Therefore I advise all those who cannot see to take the advice and help of sighted friends in this matter of dress.

Mr. P. Merrick (Elvetham): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I have one suggestion to make, and that is that blind people as far as possible should endeavour to learn games and recreative amusements which are followed by the sighted, and not endeavour to invent them for themselves. I have often been asked, "Is there any game I could learn to play with father, who is blind?" I say, "Does he know chess, or draughts, or dominoes?" "Yes," they say, "but he cannot play well." Now the blind can really play these games very well.

Another important point, I think, is the debating society. This must be very useful in drawing out the capabilities of blind people, and helping them to gain confidence.

Mr. H. C. Warrilow, f.r.c.o. (Oxford): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I should like to speak about talking, for I am afraid I do it very badly. I am entirely in favour of the debating

societies, and wish I had had the privilege of belonging to one. They are most important, and it is a great asset if they can be arranged between the blind and the seeing. It is quite as important as having debating societies in the schools themselves. With regard to loud talking, that is very much to be deprecated, as Lady Campbell said, but I think that soft talking and muttering is equally bad. In many schools this is prevalent, and you find someone speaking to you about the weather as if concocting some conspiracy.

The next point is with regard to whist parties. I think it most desirable that blind people should go to whist parties; but if they are senior pupils, it should be done not in company with one of the staff. It is not at all good for the eye of the teacher to be constantly on the pupil.

Then with regard to the organisation of work and recreation. I think in many cases these are splendidly done in some Institutions, but in other cases the recreation is so organised that there is very little freedom allowed to the pupils, with the result that when a man gets out into the world he feels uncomfortable in society, because he feels he ought to be at work all the time.

The next point I would refer to is that raised by Mr. Siddall with regard to landmarks in Institutions. I think in the first place the marks at Norwood are not at all conspicuous, and in the next place there are the natural objects which Mr. Illingworth mentioned. Another important point is that at Norwood there are rather young children, and it is necessary for them to have some sort of guide to enable them to get about.

It is true that some sighted people handle the blind in rather a curious way, especially porters.

I should like to endorse one point in Lady Campbell's paper, which is the tremendous importance of having a wife. I am sure I do not know what I should have done without mine in preparing the paper on music which I gave yesterday; there were a great many sighted letters to deal with as well as Braille ones.

I would also say that good manners are of the greatest importance, and if blind people would behave better, undoubtedly more would marry.

Mr. Yoshimoto (Tokio): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I want to thank you for the kind message which Mr. Wilson proposes to send to Tokio, to the workers there at the Congress.

My task is very easy, but theirs very difficult. They have to create a new road, and cut down mountains and remove barriers, just as much as the missionary abroad has very often huge obstacles to contend with. Such a message as is proposed will encourage them very much. I would like to thank you very heartily on their behalf.

There is another point which it is my duty to refer to, and that is with regard to the state of the blind in this country. To an outsider like myself it seems to be almost perfect. But if you go one step out of Europe and America, the state of the blind is very bad indeed. In the East their condition is in a very low state.

I believe the best way of helping the blind is to let them help themselves. You can do nothing better for the blind in the East than to show them what can be done by blind people here. The other day an important officer from Japan came to this country, and whenever any important officials come here from Japan I take advantage of it. I gave him the report I have in my hand, and I think he went to Norwood. The latest news I got was this: he feels the need of improving the state of the blind in Japan, and will recommend the Governors of all the provinces in Japan to enquire into the matter. I think that is a step in the right direction.

Capt. Peirson-Webber (Kineton): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—First, may I thank Lady Campbell for her paper, and say with what great pleasure I have heard something straight? What has been said I do not wish to repeat, but we all know how often it happens that we are told how wonderful everything is that the blind do; but I do not think that with a man of the world it makes him conceited. I do think, however, that a man of the world who loses his sight is sometimes inclined to shun society.

Somebody said, "If you want to handle blind people leave them alone." This plan is much the best; they can look after themselves, and can get along much better.

There is one thing I would like to bring forward, which has not yet been mentioned, but which I believe to be the very greatest asset to the blind, and I hope that all children and all blind adults will be educated in it: I mean by that the power of cross-examination. Mind you, it is often a very difficult matter to understand sighted people—they often talk in a manner that we cannot understand; they say, "It is just over here" or "just over there," and if you cannot cross-examine nicely, you cannot find your way. In

the country, too, very few sighted people know their right from their left, and you have to cross-examine them to see that they mean what they say.

Another point I would like to bring forward is this: people are sometimes afraid of hurting one's feelings, and it is difficult to get at the truth; they do not always know how to advise one with regard to dress and manners.

There is another thing which I feel sure will be of use to those who live in the country. They must have a well-trained dog. It is very easy to train one. Dogs are the best friends we have, and are simply invaluable to a blind person in the country. I recommend all who live in rural districts to get a good dog, and it will help in any amount of ways.

Thank you all so much for your quiet attention. I hope the question of cross-examination may help some of you considerably.

Rev. Frederick Marsh: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I hope, as this is my first opportunity of attending one of these conferences, that I may be excused for expressing my great satisfaction with all that I have seen so far. We may consider this, I am sure, a wonderful occasion in the history of the education of the blind. After all, the object of the Conference is purely educational, and we have amassed an enormous amount of useful information for the sighted as well as for the blind. I am sure you will agree that we owe a debt of gratitude to those who have been responsible for the arrangements. We ought all to be very thankful that these Conferences are held. I am sure that they must be of service to the sighted people in the cities where they are held, because they must learn many things about the blind that they did not know before. I know many good citizens of this borough who regard the blind as a very remarkable, not to say curious, class of people—mysterious, is perhaps a more appropriate word: they look upon the blind as a class of persons whom they do not understand. To such as these I hope we shall reveal a good deal about ourselves and our requirements and our rights.

I also should like to render some small tribute to the courtesy which I am sure we have all received at the hands of the people of Exeter.

In thinking of all that has been said in the valuable paper to which we have listened, and in the many grand speeches that have followed, it is perhaps almost presumptuous of me to endeavour to

add anything, but there are one or two thoughts I should like to lay before you. There has been a good deal said in favour of playgrounds being so arranged as to reduce to a minimum all the difficulties of movement. Now I think that is a great mistake. The training ground of the blind ought, as far as possible, to present the same difficulties as they will have to meet with outside, and I think to make special arrangements to indicate the steps, and to remove possible obstructions to their going about, may be fatal. They ought to be taught to expect and cope with difficulties of all kinds. It is a great mistake to make things too easy for young blind people, if they are to contend successfully with the difficulties of after-life.

Now there has been something said about the blind not making themselves conspicuous to their seeing brethren. But there are mistakes sometimes on the other side. I mean when a blind man tries to hide his blindness. I remember once there was a blind young man going home from school; he was very sensitive on the subject of his affliction, and so he was determined to try to make the people in the carriage believe he could see: with this object in view, when a boy came along with newspapers, he purchased one; as he was opening it under the pretext of making out that he could read, it dropped, and the wind carried it under the seat. Was he to examine the floor, or was he to pretend to be absolutely indifferent? I think he adopted the latter course.

Of debating societies I cannot speak too highly. I think they are of the greatest service, not only in bringing out latent powers of speech, but also in teaching much in the way of courtesy and address.

Mr. H. E. Platt (Birmingham): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I cannot help saying that in my judgment one of the wisest acts that our Conference Committee did was to bring this subject forward for discussion this morning; an act even surpassing this in wisdom, was the entrusting of the subject to Lady Campbell.

I have one or two ideas which I think may be useful and interesting. In the first place I think we should never forget that the education of a baby begins as soon as the child opens its eyes; but in the case of a blind baby this cannot be so, and therefore a blind child must always be regarded as three or four years behind a sighted child of the same actual age. The teachers should never

lose sight of this fact, but on the other hand they should not make too much of it. It is a great mistake to be constantly reminding the children of their blindness.

A very important thing indeed, after good manners have been taught and mannerisms have been checked, is that our Committees should be careful to see that their pupils on leaving are placed in good environments. It is useless to place an organist in a slum in a back street; if you wish him to be successful he must be placed amid good surroundings, where the influences will be good and beneficial for him.

I would also recommend all blind and partially blind teachers of the blind, to get as much information as possible from their sighted colleagues in the same school with regard to the mannerisms of the pupils. Blind teachers can often correct these things in a way impossible for sighted teachers to do. I encourage all our teachers at Birmingham to let me know of anything that they may see among the pupils, so that I may pass it on. The pupils do not know where the information comes from. If we give a concert, I ask my friends to let me know of anything that appears objectionable. I do exactly the same thing with regard to my sighted choir boys and choir men also, by encouraging my friends in the congregation to let me know of anything that is not seemly. In this way a blind teacher can get much help in his work.

Now I wish to say a few words which will not apply so much to those here, but may be useful elsewhere. I am therefore going to make a remark to the pupils in Institutions. When a blind man leaves his school he must have help, but I recommend every blind man, whatever his position, to take note of that help and look upon it as a debt which he owes to his school; there are some who can make their way, and if they do so, let them pay back that debt to the school.

Finally, with regard to the subject of partnership, my last remark shall be that directly a blind man has the capital to take a partner, let him take that partner, and find the fool or heroine we have heard about; in my case I found a heroine.

Lady Campbell: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I wish first to thank you for all the kind words that have been said in regard to my paper, but am afraid I am in danger of being in the position of the blind children who receive too much praise. I think you must hold the Conference Committee responsible for the length

of the paper. I was instructed by them, to ascertain the views and experience of others upon this subject, and as many people took the trouble to answer my questions very fully, I thought expression should be given to their views.

In regard to debating societies, I would like to say that at Norwood we have one for the girls, and another for the boys.

As to playgrounds, those portions of the grounds at Norwood that are used for *active games* are free from trees and shrubs, otherwise the children would get badly hurt.

Mr. Wilson (London): Before we break up I should like to propose a very hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman this morning, and also for his action in arranging for the school children of Exeter to go to the Exhibition in Queen's Hall.

Sir Francis Campbell: I will be very glad to second that. We have had a very active, wide-awake Chairman, and I am sure we all appreciate the assistance he has given.

(Put to the Meeting and carried unanimously).

The Chairman: If you are satisfied I am gratified, Ladies and Gentlemen.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES, AND GENERAL EXECUTIVE BUSINESS.

CHAIRMAN: Henry J. Wilson, Esq.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will call on Mr. Collingwood to read the report of the Conference Committee.

MR. C. M. COLINGWOOD read the Report as follows:

REPORT OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE,

Appointed at the International Conference on the Blind, held at Manchester in July, 1908.

The first Meeting of the above Committee was held in London in November, 1908, and Mr. H. J. Wilson was unanimously re-elected Chairman.

The Conference having selected Bristol for the next Meeting, the Committee felt that it was highly desirable that the Hon. Secretary should be a representative of the Institution in that City, and the Rev. H. P. G. Kingdon was elected to that position.

It was decided that the next Conference should be held during the first week of July, 1911, provided that the time in question should prove to be generally convenient.

At the following meeting, held in London in May, 1909, the Chairman intimated that the Hon. Secretary had resigned that position, and that the Committee of the Bristol Institution for the Blind had, in consequence, suggested the advisability of the Conference being held in some other city.

The Committee, after considering various proposals, ultimately decided that the Meeting should remain in the West of England, and Exeter was chosen as the venue, and Mr. C. M. Collingwood was elected as Honorary Secretary.

Seven Meetings have been held at various times; all of which have been held in London, as being a more convenient centre for the majority of the members.

This has necessitated a considerable amount of travelling on the part of several of the members, but has not materially affected the attendances, which have been exceptionally good.

A list of such attendances is appended hereto.

The Committee regard with much satisfaction the fact that for the first time the Conference has received the official recognition of the Government; the Board of Education and the Foreign Office having consented to distribute the Conference Circular and Programme to the several Foreign Governments, and asking that 200 copies of such Circular might be forwarded to them for that purpose.

The Committee express the hope that the subjects selected for discussion are such as will meet with the general approval of representatives to Conference, and that the discussions thereon may be not only eminently practical, but productive of good results.

They realize the remarkable increase in the interest taken in their work since the first International Conference was held in Edinburgh in 1905, as exemplified by the formation and growth of the several District Unions; and look forward to even more marked developments in the next few years.

They are of opinion that the time has now arrived when these Conferences should be held quinquennially rather than triennially, and they therefore recommend that the next meeting be held in 1916, and that the venue be either London or Birmingham.

They also recommend that the Conference Committee to arrange matters in connection therewith shall consist of 15 members, of whom one-third shall be Blind representatives.

Signed on behalf of the Committee,

HY. J. WILSON, *Chairman.*
CHAS. M. COLLINGWOOD, *Hon. Sec.*

MEETINGS OF CONFERENCE COMMITTEE AND ATTENDANCES OF MEMBERS, 1908-1911.

	Nov. 7th, 1908, London.	May 22nd, 1909, London.	Oct. 23rd, 1909, London.	Mar. 12th, 1910, London.	Nov. 5th, 1910, London.	Mar. 18th, 1911, London.	May 27th, 1911, London.	Total.
a, *b* Mr. H. J. Wilson ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Miss E. M. Austin ...	1	a	1	1	1	1	1	6
Miss E. Wright... ...	1	1	1	1	a	a	1	5
b Mr. J. Frew Bryden ...	a	1	a	1	a	1	a	3
a, *b* Sir F. J. Campbell ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Mr. W. H. Dixson ...	1	1	1	a	1	1	1	6
a, *b* Rev. St. Clare Hill ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	a	6
Mr. S. Maddocks ...	1	1	1	1	1	a	a	5
Rev. N. F. McNeile ...	a	1	a	a	a	a	a	1
a, *b* Mr. F. J. Munby ...	a	1	1	1	a	a	a	3
a, *b* Mr. H. W. P. Pine ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Mr. H. E. Platt ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Mr. A. Siddall ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	a	6
a, *b* Mr. H. Stainsby ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Mr. W. Stone ...	1	1	1	1	a	1	a	5
b Mr. C. M. Collingwood ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7

(*a*) Member of Conference Committee, 1902-1905.

(*b*) ,, ,, ,, 1905-1908.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have heard the Report read. I will now ask somebody to move it formally, and someone to second it.

Moved by Mr. GUY CAMPBELL.

Seconded by MR. LITTLEWOOD.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is now before you for discussion. I do not think there is much to be discussed except the last two paragraphs.

MR. STONE (Edinburgh): On the last day of the Conference at Manchester this resolution was passed at the suggestion of Mr. Guy Campbell :—

> "That instructions be given to the Conference Committee to form rules and bring into being a British Physical Recreation Society for the Blind."

I would like to ask the Secretary what has become of that matter?

MR. COLLINGWOOD: The resolution in question has been before the Conference Committee the whole of the seven meetings; on no single occasion has it not been on the agenda. In the first two instances it could not be dealt with; on the third occasion Mr. Campbell was present, and brought forward his suggestions. On the fourth occasion it was discussed, and it was thought that the Conference Committee could not well deal with it, as only a small number were heads of Institutions. It was therefore recommended that it be referred to the Superintendents' Association to be dealt with.

MR. STONE: Mr. Campbell came to three of our meetings; we had no time to hear him on two occasions; when he was heard it was proposed to refer the matter to the Superintendents' Association. I objected to that because the matter had been remitted to us, and we had no power to remit it to another body. The Superintendents' Association might be a suitable body to deal with the matter, but it was not remitted to that Association by the Conference, and I hold that the Conference Committee had no right to remit the matter. At the next meeting I was not able to be present, and it was then remitted to the Superintendents' Association.

I do not wish to press the point, but I think that in future the Conference Committee should deal with subjects remitted to them. I should like to know what has become of the matter. Has no report been put in by the Superintendents' Association?

THE CHAIRMAN: In answer I would like to say that, although I may be wrong, I always looked on the remitting of that question to the Superintendents' Association in the light that we accepted them as a

sort of Sub-Committee, and they would report to us; but the report has not come to hand.

MR. STONE: It is not at all important, but I hope in future it will be kept in view.

SIR FRANCIS CAMPBELL: I would like to move that instead of there being ten seeing people and five blind people on the Conference Committee, there be eight seeing and seven blind.

Seconded by MR. WARRILOW.

SIR FRANCIS CAMPBELL: My point is, Sir, that I think if we elect a Chairman who is a sighted man (as will probably be done) that will leave a Committee consisting of seven sighted and seven blind members. Then, if any particular question arose, they would be equally divided.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: May I make quite clear, on behalf of the Conference Committee, their position with regard to this suggestion? Until last year your Committee was elected in a somewhat indiscriminate manner, and last year, on the proposition of Mr. Guy Campbell, in order that the blind should have a due quota of representation, it was proposed that one-third should be blind and two-thirds sighted; the object being for the blind to have due representation. It was with that object that the Committee make a similar recommendation on this occasion. They thought it a fair proportion.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will put it to the meeting.

(The amendment was put to the meeting and defeated by 19 votes to 12.)

Does any other member wish to move an amendment?

REV. A. TANSEY (Whitley Bridge, Yorks.): I should like to move, as an amendment, that the Conference be held four years hence, and the one afterwards in three years—that is, one in 1915 and the next in 1918. My reason is this: that in 1918 the Pan Anglican Conference will be held, and it seems to me that if we are to follow Mr. Stainsby's advice to advertise the work of the blind as much as possible, we ought to seize that year as a special year, and for that reason I propose that in any case a Conference be held in 1918.

Seconded by SIR FRANCIS CAMPBELL.

MR. W. H. TATE (Bradford): I want to move an amendment to the amendment. I desire to move that the arrangement made at the Westminster Conference in 1902—namely, that the Conference be a

triennial one—still remain in force, for this reason: that there is so much in the air that at the present time concerns the blind, that it is most desirable that the Conference should meet again in three years' time. I think the progress made at this Conference is perhaps my best justification.

I would like to make a further suggestion. It arises in this manner: At the Manchester Conference a strong appeal was made with regard to the clergy being a stumbling block to the blind, and that a good way would be to have a special day at the Conference for the conversion of the Bishops and other church dignitaries. I should like to suggest that, not only the next Conference be three years hence, but that it be held at Westminster.

Mr. Platt (Birmingham): I beg to second that. I think these Conferences afford the finest opportunity that the blind have to make themselves heard, and think that every three years is not at all too often for them to be held.

Rev. A. Tansey (Whitley Bridge, Yorks): I think that you ought to dispose of one amendment before taking another.

Sir Francis Campbell: The question is whether the second Conference should be in three years or four. I think that it should be held in 1914.

Rev. A. Tansey: If it will clear the air, I will withdraw my amendment.

Mr. Stainsby: As a matter of fact I had no voice in making the recommendation. I happened to be late on that occasion, and when I arrived I found to my horror that it was recommended that the next Conference be held in five years' time. I think that the march of events will be so rapid that five years will be too long a time to elapse.

Rev St. Clare Hill: Mr. Chairman, may I just say a word? I think I was responsible for the suggestion that the meeting be held in five years' time, but I am quite convinced that, in view of the application lately made for aid from the State, five years would be too long, and I therefore withdraw my suggestion.

(On being put to the vote, Mr. Tate's amendment that the next Conference be held in 1914 was carried unanimously).

The Chairman: Now as regards the venue of the next Conference.

Mr. Gregory: As this is an International Conference, may I ask whether the Committee have considered the desirability or propriety of holding the next Conference in some country other than England?

A Voice: Are we an International Conference?

Rev. St. Clare Hill: The question has already been raised, but it was felt that the difficulties were insuperable. Many whom we are always glad to see present would be unable to attend.

A Voice: We may meet where we like, but can we call ourselves an International Conference?

The Chairman: We will bring that before the meeting another day.

Mr. W. H. Tate: A moment ago it was suggested that the next Conference should be held in London, and I want to say a word in support of that. We have laboured during these various Conferences, and have made certain progress. Those who have attended all the Conferences will be glad to recognise that this one is an advance, in the sense that we have a larger number of educated blind here than have ever been present before. Those of our sighted who have been drumming drums on their behalf must feel this to be a great uplifting of their vision. One of our great difficulties is that we do not get a sufficient number of the right sort of sighted people here. There are the old friends, but we do not get these grand folk who promise to attend. Last time in Manchester we had a Bishop or two, but this time many people seem to ignore us. In the newspaper we give place to the Bakers' Conference now being held at Plymouth. I therefore suggest that it would be an advantage to go to London, in order that we may have a day specially set apart to convert the clergy—they certainly deserve it and need it; and we ought to have a day for the House of Commons, and let our House of Commons people know in the best way possible what are our aims. The matter of State aid is, of course, in the air. At least, I am very glad to say it is no longer in the air, but it is actually on the ground and at work. I would like to say, that being so, it is desirable in the interests of the Government themselves, that they should have present within a short time a body capable of advising them. We should have the finest Exhibition that can be got together, and a representative concert, like that which was given on Tuesday evening, should be arranged. These are levers to influence public opinion. If we can make the Exhibition equal to the one in New York, and the King would consent to open it, we should be on the road to success.

I propose that the next Conference be held in London.

Seconded by Sir Francis Campbell.

MR. LITTLEWOOD (Liverpool): I should like to propose Birmingham, for this reason: London is so huge a place that we may be lost there, and make no impression at all. If we go to a town like Birmingham, although not so very much smaller, the influence of the Conference would be far greater.

Seconded by MR. DIXSON.

SIR FRANCIS CAMPBELL: I should like to ask, why not Upper Norwood, and meet in our Concert Hall?

THE CHAIRMAN: Two towns are proposed.

MR. PREECE: Mr. Chairman, London is the easiest city to get at for International Delegates, and you are likely to increase the number of attendances if the Conference is held there. There is no city in the world easier to get about in, because of the increase in the number of tubes and motor buses. London is certainly the best place to make an impression on the nation. I beg to support the proposition for London.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will put the amendment first—that Birmingham be the venue for the next Conference.

(The amendment was defeated).

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Tate's proposal will now be put to the Meeting—that London be the venue.

(Carried nem. con.)

Then London is the place agreed upon.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there any other matter in connection with the Report?

MR. PREECE: May we speak as regards the time for holding the Conference? It is inconvenient for many, such as School Teachers, who cannot get away at certain times. I suggest either the last week in July or the first week in August.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think we can accept that as a motion, but it may be an instruction to the Committee.

MR. W. H. TATE (Bradford): I have had occasion within the last few months to consider several matters from the point of view of the State, and I think everything should be done in such a way as to remain in touch with the House of Commons, and not at such a time that they will have gone for their holidays.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we will all agree to that.

MR. GREGORY (London): It is all very well to arrange a Conference of this description in a holiday time to suit certain individuals, but there

are a number who come who hold office in Blind Institutions, and you may be doing away with their holiday. I do not approve of that principle.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you make any recommendation to the Committee?

MR. GREGORY: I am prepared to leave it with the Committee.

MR. STOTT (Edinburgh): I suggest that the Conference be held earlier in the season, so that it will not interfere with holidays or teachers, and also you will get all that is asked for in connection with the House of Commons.

MR. WARRILOW (Oxford): I think that if we want to have many organists at the next Conference, it would be easier for them in July than at any other part of the year; it is difficult for them to get off in the middle of the season.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think you all see the great difficulty in settling the date. It is impossible to do it to-day.

A DELEGATE: Suggested that it should be held in May because of the Religious Conferences at that time.

MR. STAINSBY (London): That seems to me a good reason why it should be held then.

SIR FRANCIS CAMPBELL: I think we should leave it to the Committee, but it really seems to me that May would be a good time, and we should have a chance of getting at the House of Commons. I think we should appoint a special Committee to introduce someone in the House of Commons, and will make that motion by and by.

The adoption of the Report was put to the meeting and carried.

THE CHAIRMAN: Now the election of the Conference Committee. Voting papers have been handed to every delegate. I wish to explain that delegates only can vote—not members.

You will find that seventeen names of sighted representatives have been suggested, and of those you can vote for ten; while there are eleven blind representatives suggested, and of these you can vote for five. Each person has fifteen votes in all.

You may now fill up the papers and they will then be handed to scrutineers who will be appointed to count the votes.

THE CHAIRMAN: We will now ask Mr. Tate to read the Report of the Pensions Committee.

The Report was read by MR. TATE as follows :—

REPORT OF THE PENSIONS COMMITTEE.

Appointed at the International Conference on the Blind, held at the Central Hall, Manchester, July 24th to August 1st, 1908.

The Committee was appointed to consider the advisability of carrying out the suggestions in the paper on "Pensions to the Blind," read at the Conference by Miss E. F. Massey, of Manchester, those nominated to form the Committee being:—Miss Massey, Mr. C. M. Collingwood, Rev. St. Clare Hill, Mr. B. Purse. Dr. A. W. Ranger, Mr. W. H. Tate, and Mr. H. J. Wilson. The first meeting took place at the offices of the Gardner's Trust for the Blind, Westminster, on November 7th, 1908, when Mr. H. J. Wilson was elected Chairman and Mr. W. H. Tate Secretary.

The following points arising out of Miss Massey's paper were discussed :—

1. The need for a larger number of Pensions.
2. How to increase the funds available for this purpose.
3. To ascertain how far the amount at present available fails to keep pace with the demand for help.

It was decided that the Committee should, in the first instance, endeavour to obtain reliable information as to the number of eligible and deserving blind persons for whom as yet no pensions had been obtainable ; and the Secretary was instructed to forward a letter to the Secretaries of the various Societies which administer Pensions to the Blind, inviting them to be good enough to state the number of approved applicants upon the waiting lists of the respective charities.

In the course of the discussion Mr. Wilson mentioned that a meeting of the Secretaries of various charities, at which he was present, had been held in London on October 23rd, for the purpose of considering, in connection with the working of the Old Age Pensions Act, what action should be taken in the case of British subjects of the age of 70 years and upwards who have not been in receipt of any relief from any Poor Law Authority, and are at present receiving annuities from charitable sources, when it was resolved that the Governors and Committees of the various Societies should be advised to consider the desirability of adopting the following suggestions :—

(1) "That it is desirable that all Charities should as far as possible act in unity as regards the Government Old Age Pensions; (2) that every person having attained the age of 70 years, who is in receipt of an annuity from a Charity and is eligible to

apply for a Government Old Age Pension of less than the maximum allowance of 5s. per week, or whose total income does not exceed £34 2s. per annum, shall have such charitable annuity reduced so as to render him or her eligible to apply for a pension of the largest possible amount under the Government scale, provided always that such reduction does not involve the beneficiary in any pecuniary loss; and (3) that when two or more Charities are granting annuities to one and the same person, and it is desired to reduce his or her total income, such charities should reduce their annuity by mutual agreement."

The Committee cordially welcomed this information as indicating the possibility of many beneficial re-adjustments in the near future, and that upon the older annuitants receiving the Government Pension others now upon the waiting lists might be elected to the vacancies thus created.

In view of the valuable information regarding the various Charities and Trusts contained in Mr. Stuart Johnson's book, "Annuities to the Blind," it was agreed that steps should be taken to invite Mr. Johnson to bring out a new edition of the work, giving the latest particulars concerning them; but, seeing that such a proposal would necessitate much labour and considerable expense, it was deemed expedient, in the first place, that the Secretary should bring the proposal before the Committees of the several Unions of Agencies, &c., for the Blind and invite their support.

A further meeting of the Committee took place on Saturday, May 22nd, 1909, when it was reported that communications had been received from 28 Societies and Trusts, and that the number of "approved applicants" upon the waiting lists of those Charities amounted in the aggregate to 747. In several instances, however, the replies, whilst giving no specific details, suggested that there were large numbers of equally eligible candidates in various parts of the country, and that the particulars given by no means indicated the extent of the need for additional pensions.

The figures, having regard to the Societies from whence they had been received, were full of interest, and upon being tabulated in relation to the existing pensions, the results were as follows:—

Pensions applicable to Blind Persons residing in—	Existing Pensions.	Approved Applicant upon the Waiting List.
Group A.—"England," England and Wales," "England, Wales & Scotland"	2,528	234
,, B.—In the "United Kingdom" ...	1,772	198
,, C.—In or near London	887	177

Group D.—In specific towns in the Provinces, as Bradford, Reading, &c. ...	371	79
„ E.—In Districts and Counties, as Bristol and District, Kent, Sussex, &c.	199	59
Total ...	5,757	747

The coming into operation of the "Old Age Pensions Act" on January 1st, 1909, had brought about many changes, however, and it was anticipated that many of those thus enumerated might already have been elected to vacancies created by the re-adjustments referred to. It was stated, for instance, that the Committees of Hethrington's Charity, of Gardner's Trust, and of the Clothmakers' Company had been able to withdraw many pensions of £10 each from those over 70 years of age, thereby enabling the Blind Pensioners to receive instead the full maximum Old Age Pension of £13, and thus benefiting them by an additional £3 a year, and had also arranged that in cases where Committees had previously given pensions of £10 each, upon these persons arriving at the age of 70, no withdrawal should take place before the Committees had consulted together.

A communication was received from the Newcastle Home Teaching Society suggesting united action in support of the amendment of the "Old Age Pensions Act," by an addition to Section 3, sub-section (a) :—"exempting out-door relief given to a blind person, who is otherwise eligible, from disqualifying for an Old Age Pension."

It was subsequently ascertained that the Government contemplated the removal of this disqualification in due time in regard to all persons, both blind and sighted, an amendment which has since been carried into effect.

A communication was also received from Mr. Guy M. Campbell, one of the Hon. Secretaries of the "Union of Unions," containing the following Referendum adopted at a Meeting held in London on the 6th February, 1909 :—

> "*Pensions.*" It was reported that the Metropolitan Union was able to state that nearly all the Blind within its area over the age of 70, had applied for the Government Old Age Pension. The Union had further come to the unanimous conclusion that it would not further assist any individual blind person already in receipt of 10/- per week, until all the Blind in its area were receiving a similar amount. This principle was approved by the Conference. A discussion arose as to whether the age of 70, so

far as blind people were concerned, was not too late an age. Some speakers advocated 50, others 60 years.

Finally it was agreed—

"To refer the whole question to the Pensions Committee together with a letter stating that it was the opinion of the majority of this Conference that in the case of blind persons the age for the Government Pensions should be 60 instead of 70."

After careful consideration of this question and of certain schedules giving the relative ages of the Blind, and of the proportionate additional cost such a change might entail upon the National Exchequer, the Committee felt that fuller information was necessary before giving an opinion; and the Secretary was instructed to write the Secretaries of the several Unions asking them to kindly furnish particulars of the number of blind persons in their respective areas of the ages of 60, 65, and 70 years.

It was agreed that a recommendation should be made to the several Unions inviting them to direct the attention of the Societies to the consideration of the Blind in their respective areas for whom Pensions are desirable, and in the case of those over 70, to assist them to obtain the Government Old Age Pension (as has been done by the Union for the Metropolitan Counties), and in the case of those under 70 to bring them to the notice of the special charities which give Pensions to the Blind.

It was reported that the proposed re-issue of "Annuities to the Blind" was heartily approved by the North of England, the Metropolitan, and the West of England Unions, and that upon publication they would undertake to distribute a number of copies amongst their Societies. The Secretaries of the other Unions stated that their Unions were as yet but imperfectly organized, and could not at the present stage give such an undertaking.

It was unanimously resolved:—

"That Mr. Stuart Johnson be requested to kindly undertake the publication of a further Edition of his Book, entitled, "Annuities to the Blind," and the Committee would respectfully suggest to him the desirability of a re-issue of the work from time to time at periods of, say, every three years."

In regard to other business, the Committee was of opinion that until the "Old Age Pension Act" had been in operation for some time, and the altered conditions resulting therefrom had become more fully known, effective consideration was well-nigh impossible.

THE CHAIRMAN: Will someone propose the adoption of the Report?

Proposed by Mr. PINE,

Seconded by Mr. ILLINGWORTH,

That the Report be adopted, printed, and circulated.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does anybody wish to make any remarks on it? If not I will put it to the meeting at once.

(The adoption of the Report was put to the meeting and carried unanimously).

Moved by the Rev. ST. CLARE HILL,

Seconded by Mr. W. M. STONE,

"That, as there is considerable business to be done this afternoon, the Report on Preventable Blindness be taken as read."

(Put to the meeting and carried unanimously).

The Report was as follows:—

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PREVENTABLE BLINDNESS.

Appointed at the International Conference on the Blind, held in Manchester, in July, 1908.

The above Committee (with the exception of Dr. N. Bishop Harman and Dr. Hartley) were appointed at the Manchester Conference to deal with the Prevention of Blindness, and having power to add to their number they considerably strengthened their deliberations at their first meeting by co-opting these two experienced Ophthalmic Surgeons as fellow Members of the Committee.

At a meeting convened by the Rev. St. Clare Hill, and held in London, on February 5th, 1909, Mr. H. J. Wilson was unanimously elected Chairman of the Committee, and Mr. C. M. Collingwood was appointed Honorary Secretary.

The Chairman reported the receipt of communications from Dr. S. Stephenson, Chairman of the British Medical Association Committee on Preventable Blindness, and it was unanimously agreed that although each Committee should act independently, they should render mutual assistance to each other and work on parallel lines.

Miss Edith Wright was requested to serve as a representative of this Committee upon the Public Health Committee of the National Union of Women workers, in order that the subject of Infantile Blindness and

its Prevention should be kept prominently in the foreground of their programme.

The scope of the operations of this Committee were carefully considered, and it was ultimately agreed that they should be as follows:—

1. To consider what means should be adopted to induce Public Authorities to enforce, to the fullest extent, the early compulsory notification of birth.
2. To consider upon whom should the responsibility of the foregoing notification rest.
3. To consider the adoption of means to bring about the compulsory notification of Ophthalmia Neonatorum.
4. To consider the question of compulsory prophylaxis of this disease.
5. To consider what methods should be adopted to inform and instruct the general public on the question of Preventable Blindness.
6. To consider the question of the publication and dissemination of literature on this subject.

It was further agreed that a correlative subject was—

"To what extent the introduction and operation of the Employers' Liability Act has affected, or is likely to affect, adult workers with defective vision."

At subsequent meetings these points were carefully considered, and eventually the following Report was drawn up, and the Hon. Secretary was instructed to circulate it as thoroughly and as widely as possible.

REPORT.

The subject of the Prevention of the Disease which so frequently causes Blindness in Newly-born Infants is one that for many years has engaged the attention of all whose work has brought them into contact with the blind. At every Conference that has been held during recent years relative to the welfare of the blind, whether at home or abroad, attention has been called to the urgency for taking satisfactory measures for the checking of this disastrous cause of blindness.

The medical libraries contain a host of papers and books which have treated of this disease, and of the blindness consequent thereon. Recent English literature has been summarised in the Report of the British Medical Association Committee (*British Medical Journal*, May 8th, 1909), to which reference will be made further.

The gist of the papers is to the effect :—

1. That more than one third of the blindness found in British Blind Schools is due to this one cause—infants born with good eyes are blinded by the disease within a few days of their birth.
2. The risk of blindness is entirely preventable by prompt and efficient treatment.

To this end it is now almost universally agreed, by both medical men and laymen cognisant with the subject, that the disease known as "The Ophthalmia of the New-Born" should be scheduled as Compulsorily Notifiable; and it is believed that by such action this appaling source of misery and helplessness would be checked.

In spite, however of these urgent recommendations, no action has been taken by the British Public Health Authorities, nor have these Authorities, so far, availed themselves of their permissive powers to make the disease compulsorily notifiable.

At the International Conference on the Blind, held in Manchester in July, 1908, it was held that no sufficient steps had been taken to give publicity to the urgency of the matter. A representative Committee was therefore appointed to consider the subject fully, and to make such recommendations as they might deem, not only advisable, but as likely to be of practical utility.

At the first meeting of this Committee two Ophthalmic Surgeons were co-opted as members of, and advisors to, the Committee—Mr. Robert N. Hartley (Hon. Surgeon, Leeds United Institution for the Blind and Deaf and Dumb), and Mr. N. Bishop Harman (Oculist to the London County Council Blind Schools). These gentlemen were expected to advise on matters relating to the North and South of England respectively.

During the sittings of this Committee, another Committee, instituted by the British Medical Association, has had this same matter under review. The two Committees have acted upon quite independent lines, and the fact that they have arrived at similar conclusions, and make virtually the same recommendations, adds greatly to the weight of their recommendations.

The following are the recommendations of the Committee appointed by the International Conference :—

1. That in the opinion of this Committee the adoption by the Public Health Authorities of the Early Notification of Births Act is urgent.

2. That in the opinion of this Committee the disease known as the "Ophthalmia of the New-Born" should be added to the list of diseases compulsorily notifiable under the powers of the Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act of 1889.

3. That in the opinion of this Committee—

(*a*) More definite teaching should be given to midwives on the seriousness of eye disease in children; and

(*b*) That the Central Midwives' Board should issue more stringent instructions on the danger of "whites" in lying-in women.

With a view to obtaining more exact knowledge of the incidence of "blindness" in subsequent census returns, the Committee recommend that the Registrar-General should be requested to define and classify "blindness" in his schedules in some such way as the following:—

1. Stone Blind, *i.e.*, the individual has no power to see the movement of fingers beiore the eyes.

2. Partially blind, *i.e.*, in the cases of—

i. *Children.* Those who have not sufficient sight (even with the aid of glasses) to be taught in an ordinary school.

ii. *Adults.* Those who have not sufficient sight (even with the aid of glasses) to earn a living by ordinary means.

In conclusion, the Committee desire to emphasise the fact that the question is at the present juncture, and is likely to be in the future, of much greater importance than in the past. For the introduction and extension of the operation of the Employers' Liability Act is seriously affecting, and is likely still more seriously to affect, the earning powers of adult workers with defective vision.

Copies of the above Report were sent to all Institutions and Societies in connection with work amongst the Blind, to the various Government Departments concerned in Public Health, and to the following leading papers:—

16 London Daily Papers.
7 „ Weekly „
13 Scotch Daily „
19 Irish „ „

116 Provincial Daily Papers
7 „ Weekly „
15 Medical and Nursing Papers.

Almost simultaneously (June 1909) the Report of the British Medical Association was issued, which, whilst making practically identical recommendations, was even more emphatic in its wording.

Previous to the issue of such reports compulsory notification of Ophthalmia Neonatorum was practically non-existent.

In the two years that have since elapsed no less than 100 Health Authorities have, with the consent and approval of the Local Government Board, adopted the second recommendation of this Committee, and added Ophthalmia Neonatorum to the list of compulsorily notifiable diseases.

The List, as supplied to the Hon. Secretary by the Local Government Board in February last, is as follows :—

Metropolitan Boroughs	29
Boroughs	27
Urban Districts	35
Rural Districts	9
	100

Under such circumstances the Committee are of opinion that all that is now required to make it practically universal throughout the Kingdom, is to create a healthy public opinion upon the matter; and this should, in the future, be pre-eminently the work of the Committees of the several District Unions.

In dealing with this question the Committee are under a deep obligation, and express their sincere regret at the recent demise of Mr. E. V. Greatbatch, who was one of the pioneers of public opinion on this matter, and to whom should be attributed the credit for the first practical proposal for making the disease compulsorily notifiable in the pottery district.

We had hoped that Mr. Greatbatch would be present and take an active part in the Conference proceedings.

Whilst expressing their hearty appreciation of the valuable assistance rendered in this connection by the Local Government Board, the Committee regret that their suggestions respecting the classification of blindness in the recent Census were not more closely adopted.

A deputation from this Committee waited upon the Registrar-General in support of some more satisfactory method of recording the totally and partially blind in the 1911 Census.

The methods adopted are retrograde rather than progressive, and the Committee cannot but feel that the Returns made under this heading must necessarily be illusory and of little use for statistical purposes.

Signed on behalf of the Committee,

HY. J. WILSON, *Chairman.*

CHAS, M. COLLINGWOOD, *Hon. Sec.*

THE CHAIRMAN: Does anyone wish to make a remark on the Report?

Moved by Mr. GUY CAMPBELL,

Seconded by Mr. MILES PRIESTLEY,

"That the Report be adopted, received, and printed."

(The adoption of the Report was put to the Meeting and carried.)

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. H. W. P. Pine will now read the Report of the National Committee for the Employment of the Blind.

MR. PINE (Nottingham): Before I read the Report may I just make a personal allusion? We were told yesterday to advertise blind work as much as possible, and I suppose it was for that reason I was told the other day that I ought to go about with a card round my neck or a label on my back, because I am advertising tweed made by the blind. I am wearing to-day a suit made on a Swedish loom, cut off from the roll of tweed which is on view at the Exhibition. It was woven by one of our girls from Nottingham who is now in this room. It can be supplied by us at 3/6 per yard. There was a mistake in the newspaper the other day; it gave us credit not only for making cloth at Nottingham, but it said that we keep tailors at our Institution. This is not true; we do not go so far as that; but I can tell you that it takes seven yards to make a suit. The material costs 3/6 a yard, so that the cloth costs 24/6, and a tailor in the town charged me £1 17s. 6d. for making the suit. My suit therefore cost me £3 2s.

(Mr. Pine then read the Report.)

REPORT OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE BLIND.

The National Committee for the Employment of the Blind, appointed at the First International Conference held in Edinburgh in 1905, and re-appointed at Manchester in 1908, beg leave to present their Report.

The Committee have met on six occasions since the last Conference,

being the period covered by this Report, and at the first meeting Mr. Henry J. Wilson and Mr. H. W. P. Pine were unanimously elected Chairman and Hon. Secretary respectively. Five meetings of the Committee have been held in London and one at York, with an average attendance of 9 out of a total membership of 13.

The Committee have continued their very earnest and anxious work and have given much time and labour to the consideration of what it is possible to do to secure the better and more general employment of the blind of this country.

In the last Report the Committee stated that they had made enquiries from the various Institutions whether they were in favour of calling the attention of the Government to the question of the better employment of the Blind, and of soliciting work therefrom, and following upon replies (which were practically unanimous) that some representation should be made to the Government, they had as a first step appointed a deputation, which had had interviews with the chief officials of the various Government Departments, the result being that considerable orders for hampers for the Post Office had been executed by a number of selected Institutions; and brooms, brushes, and other goods had been supplied to the War Office and the India Office. It was pointed out, however, that the orders were not only quite unremunerative, but entailed a distinct loss, and the Committee looked forward to some arrangement being made whereby the Institutions might be protected against such loss.

The Report went on to state that the Committee were of opinion that the time had arrived when the Government should be asked to do something to assist Workshops for the Blind.

The Committee have given very anxious attention to this matter during the past three years, and have arrived at the conclusion that it is impossible to grapple with the problem satisfactorily, and to solve the difficulties surrounding the question, without some help from the Government.

It appeared therefore to the Committee that they were justified in asking the Government that reasonable consideration should be given to this matter, and in looking to them for some practical assistance.

The Blind Aid Bill, promoted by the National League, had been under consideration, but as the Committee were unable to support it, they determined to promote a new Bill.

It has been urged in some quarters that such a course would be asking for exceptional legislation, and would at once give rise to similar claims on behalf of other defective classes; but it may be pointed out

that the Blind are the only class requiring exceptional provision, or special workshops for their employment.

The Committee having given their best endeavours to the subject feel that this problem of Blind employment must be faced, and those who have to bear the burden of management of Institutions know how great that burden is and are generally agreed that something more must be done. They are convinced that sentiment and philanthropy, valuable as these undoubtedly are, do not fully satisfy the present day needs of the Blind in the way of employment nor in carrying out all that is required to supplement sufficiently the wages of the Blind, to enlarge existing workshops, and to erect new buildings where found necessary. They have estimated that some 200 Blind persons are completing their industrial training each year, for whom in many cases there is no suitable opening in life. These Blind persons have been educated and trained for the most part at the public expense, and, if the results of this training are not to be lost to them and to the community, a greater provision for their employment is an absolute necessity. The Committee realise that this want of employment among the Blind only forms part of the general unemployed problem for which Governments have felt some responsibility and with which they have attempted to deal, and seeing the serious nature of the problem in regard to the sighted it is not a matter of surprise that the problem as relating to the Blind is one of far greater gravity. Indeed it may be regarded as still more difficult, for when employment is plentiful the Blind cannot obtain entrance to sighted workshops, and recent legislation has increased the difficulty by throwing out many who suffer from any affection of the sight.

The Bill of the Employment Committee was therefore drafted in 1906 and copies of it were subsequently sent to every Institution for the Blind in the United Kingdom, and had the approval of about two-thirds of them. Owing to the state of Parliamentary business, however, in 1909, it was found quite impossible to proceed with it.

At the same time the Committee was very desirous of making some move, and it was therefore decided to seek interviews with the Government, so that the pressing need of something being done might be pointed out, and to ask for a capitation grant to assist the Blind employees at Institutions, as a temporary provision until such time as the Bill could go forward. A Sub-Committee was thereupon appointed to approach the Local Government Board, the Secretary for Scotland, and for Ireland, and the promoters of the Blind Aid Bill, and a

statement describing the situation was prepared for use on these occasions.

In March, 1910, the Hon. Secretary communicated with the Right Hon. John Burns, the President of the Local Government Board, requesting him to receive a Deputation on the subject of the Employment of the Blind of this country (which Deputation Sir William Mather had promised to introduce), and at the same time he forwarded to Mr. Burns a copy of the prepared Statement. The reply received was that the President desired to consult with the Hon. Secretary upon the application, and the Chairman and Hon. Secretary met Mr. Burns when the matter was discussed and all available information asked for was subsequently placed in his hands including copies of the two Blind Aid Bills. A comparison of the two Bills was also sent and arguments adduced why the Government should accede to the appeal for assistance.

A reply was at length received in which the President stated that he would not overlook the views of the National Employment Committee as expressed in the Memorandum placed in his hands, but that it did not appear at that time that there would be any advantage in the attendance of a Deputation.

The Committee were subsequently informed that the Trades Union Congress Parliamentary Committee had taken charge of the Blind Aid Bill which emanated from the National League of the Blind, and it was suggested to the Committee that they should meet the Parliamentary Committee with a view of uniting together and endeavouring to discover some common ground of action in regard to the application to the Government. This interview took place in December last, and the Committee were represented by the Sub-Committee which had been appointed as a Deputation to the Government, and a further meeting with the Parliamentary Committee was subsequently arranged, when four members of the National League were also present. At this meeting an amended Bill of the National League was produced, in which, for the first time, existing Institutions were recognised by them, and several clauses from the National Employment Committee's Bill had been inserted. This Bill, which was new to the Parliamentary Committee, was then discussed and amended in some of its details. The National Employment Committee carefully considered the Bill upon a Report of these joint meetings, and while they were unable to support all its clauses, they recognised that the measure embodied a principle which, if carried into effect, would materially improve the condition of the Blind generally. They thought, however, that the changes involved

especially in the Institutions themselves, would be so far-reaching that they ought to take an opportunity of submitting the Bill to the Institutions whose co-operation they much desired. Accordingly the Bill was considered at a special meeting of representatives of the Institutions of the United Kingdom, held in March last. After much discussion, resolutions were passed to the effect that the State should be responsible for the technical training of capable Blind persons over sixteen years of age who needed it, in the same manner as it was already responsible for the elementary education of those under sixteen by the provisions of the Elementary Education (Blind and Deaf Children) Act 1893, and also that the State and County and Borough Councils (as well as Parish Councils, Scotland) should assist in the better and more general employment of the Blind.

The representatives at this Conference regretted that they were unable to approve the Bill as drafted, but they appointed a Committee to consider the whole subject of employment of the Blind, and the question of the necessity of Government aid in relation thereto, with instructions to draft a new Bill if, in their judgment, they found one was needed.

The names of the Committee appointed are as follows :—

The Rev. T. Burns, D.D.	... Edinburgh
Mr. J. J. Burton ...	... Middlesborough
Mr. P. M. Evans ...	... London
Mr. Caryl Fiennes ...	... Dublin
The Rev. St. Clare Hill	... Leatherhead
Mr. W. H. Illingworth	... Manchester
Mr. S. Johnson ...	... Leatherhead
Lord Lamington ...	... London
Mr. A. L. Lowe ...	... Birmingham
Sir Edward O'Malley	... London
Mr. M. Priestley ...	... Bradford
Mr. H. Stainsby ...	... London
Mr. H. J. Wilson ...	... London
Mr. H. W. P. Pine ...	... Nottingham

This Committee, it will be observed, consists of six members of the National Committee for the Employment of the Blind, with others, some of whom represent some of the largest Institutions in the country. There is no difference whatever between the National Employment Committee and that appointed by the Special Meeting, the only desire being to strengthen the hands of the National Employment Committee.

The Committee have held two meetings and are giving very earnest attention to the whole matter, the results of which will probably be known by the time the Conference takes place.

From all the experience gained, and the enquiries made by the Committee during the six years of their existence, they are quite convinced there is absolute need for more monetary assistance for the better and more general employment of the blind. Many of the existing Institutions have not sufficient funds to extend their buildings so as to make provision for all those who need employment in their respective districts, nor have they the means from voluntary sources to make the requisite augmentation of wages so as to give the blind a better living, and for other purposes connected with the proper administration of the Institutions. There is no doubt that providing the necessary funds were forthcoming, some, if not all, of the existing Workshops could admit more employees and other Workshops could be established.

The Committee are strongly of opinion that it is quite impossible to give all able-bodied Blind sufficient employment and proper remuneration for their labour without more funds at the disposal of the Committees of the various Institutions, and if this supply cannot be obtained from private benefactors from what sources can it be derived, except from National and Municipal sources?

The Committee have considered in what other way an appeal could be made and publicity given to the need for more employment for the Blind, and they have framed a resolution on the subject which they have recommended to be sent, by each Institution in its own district, to all the Local Authorities in the country as far as possible, viz., the Town Councils, County Councils, and other Urban Councils, Parish Councils, Poor Law Authorities, etc.

The Resolution is as follows—

> "That the wage-earning capacity developed by the Blind as the result of training provided at the public expense should tend to the reduction of rate expenditure, and to this end this meeting calls the attention of Local Authorities to the fact that to place orders with Institutions for goods made in their workshops will provide the Blind with additional work, and is true economy."

and the following explanatory statement was prepared to accompany the Resolution :—

> "The National Committee for the Employment of the Blind, which was appointed at the International Conference on the Blind held in Edinburgh in 1905, desire to call public attention to the

serious lack of employment for the Blind in this country, and to bring to the notice of Public Authorities the fact that most helpful service might be rendered to these people without any increase in expenditure by such Authorities.

"The members of the Committee are representative of the whole country, and the Committee have given much careful thought to the solution of the difficult problem of the better and more general employment of the Blind. Amongst other means to that end it has been resolved to solicit the aid of Public Authorities requiring such goods as can be successfully made by the Blind. The Blind are competent workpeople in the following trades:—Brush-making, Basket-making, Mat-making, Mattress-making, Pianoforte Tuning, Type-writing, etc., and the manufacture of such articles as bass brooms, street sweeping roller brushes, door mats, hampers and baskets, bedding. etc., provides useful employment for them.

"It may be pointed out that all such public bodies are large consumers of goods the Blind can make. In some districts the Authorities have kindly recognised the aspirations of Blind artizans, and send their orders in a more or less degree to the nearest Institution for the Blind, and an earnest appeal is made to extend this system. Where a sufficiency of orders has been obtained many of the Blind become quite self-supporting, and this benefit to an afflicted class can be still further extended if only the Public Authorities will assist by placing orders for such work as the Blind can effectively and efficiently perform. Such a step will also have the direct benefit to the Local Authority of reducing the rates to whatever extent the Blind are employed instead of being supported by the Poor Law Authorities.

"There is also the additional consideration that it seems sad to reflect that while Institutions for the Blind are doing splendid work in training, the result of such organisation is lost to the community in consequence of an inability to find work for those who, under special difficulties, have acquired efficiency in a trade."

The Committee venture to believe that much good will result from this action, and that a wider realisation of responsibilty for the welfare of the Blind on the part of sighted people will be encouraged.

With a view of educating public opinion and of strengthening the hands of the National Employment Committee, the step they had taken in approaching the Government was brought before the North of

England Union of Institutions, Societies and Agencies for the Blind at the annual meeting held last year at Sunderland, and a Resolution was carried unanimously to the following effect :—

> "That this Union, assembled in annual meeting at Sunderland, 7th May, 1910, cordially endorses the proposals which the National Committee for the Better Employment of the Blind have decided to lay before H.M. Government for the purpose of preventing the Blind of this country, after being trained for active service at the public expense, from falling into enforced idleness."

and a copy of the Resolution was forwarded to the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Home Secretary, and the President of the Local Government Board.

The other Unions of England and Wales were also communicated with and invited to support the Committee in the same way, and a similar resolution was passed by each of them.

The arrangements made with the Government Departments for the supply of goods under contract described in the last report have been continued, and orders for a large number of Parcel Post Protectors have been placed with the various selected Institutions, and orders for brooms and other goods have been given by the War Office.

It is to be regretted, however, that prices offered to the Institutions, viz.: "the average price of accepted tenders," are not only unremunerative, but entail serious loss. Correspondence has ensued between the Committee and the Departments, and a strong appeal has been made to them to allot the Institutions a better price. It was pointed out that serious losses were sustained on the previous contract, though force of circumstances in having to find employment compelled the Institutions to take the work. The Department, while paying these low prices, insist upon the standard or highest rate of wages being paid for the work by the Institutions, and the articles must be exact and up to the standard even to the most insignificant detail.

The Committee, therefore, asked that as the average price of accepted tenders had proved an impossible one without loss, that the Department should give the Institutions a price based not upon the average price, but upon the price of the highest accepted tender. Inasmuch as this price is being paid in the case of some contractors, the Committee felt that the Government Department might well make this concession to the Institutions in their efforts to find employment for a class unemployable elsewhere and so assist in solving a very difficult national problem.

It is to be regretted, however, that this appeal has met with no response whatever from the Authorities, and it would appear to the Committee that it is quite useless to look for any assistance from the Government Departments outside these ordinary competitive prices, and that they are not disposed to give the Institutions any consideration, nor to relax in the slightest their most stringent regulations in regard to the observance of trivial details.

The Committee are of opinion, that the time is now most opportune for calling the attention of the Government to the question of the employment of the Blind by this representative Conference, and they beg leave to recommend that a message be sent to the Government before the Conference closes, in the following terms—

> This Conference of representatives of Institutions, Societies and Agencies, and others interested in the welfare of the Blind throughout the United Kingdom, assembled at Exeter, July 3-8, 1911, respectfully calls the attention of H.M. Government to the urgent need for the BETTER AND MORE GENERAL EMPLOYMENT OF THE BLIND OF THIS COUNTRY; deplores the serious loss to the community and to the Blind themselves by reason of the enforced idleness of a large number of capable Blind workers trained for the most part at the public expense; and declares its conviction that the difficult question of providing employment for the Blind cannot properly be solved without assistance from National and Municipal sources."

It is recommended that the National Employment Committee be reappointed by this Conference. The questions with which they have had to deal have been of great complexity and of supreme difficulty, but they believe that much real progress has been made. Several important matters are pending, and they are therefore of opinion that it would be inadvisable at the present juncture to make any material change in the personnel of the Committee, and they venture to think that ere another Conference comes round a great step forward in the permanent solution of this problem will have been accomplished.

On behalf of the Committee,

H. W. P. PINE,

Hon. Secretary.

May 27th, 1911.

Statement of Account of the Hon. Sec. of the National

RECEIPTS.

1906 to 1908.

To SUBSCRIPTIONS received from :—	£	s.	d.
London Workshops for the Blind, Tottenham Court Road	1	1	0
Institute for Massage for the Blind, London	1	1	0
Cardiff Workshops for the Blind	1	1	0
Leeds Institution for the Blind	1	1	0
Oldham Workshops for the Blind		10	6
Home Teaching Society for the Blind, Oldham ...		10	6
Penrith Blind Society		10	0
Royal Victoria School for the Blind, Newcastle ...	1	1	0
Society for Teaching the Blind in the Counties of Stirling, etc.		5	0
Royal Glasgow Asylum for the Blind	1	1	0
Aberdeen Branch of the British Blind Association ...	1	1	0
Accrington Institution for the Blind	1	1	0
Blind Women's Industries, Oldham ... —	1	1	0
Manchester and Salford Blind Society	1	1	0
West London Workshops for the Blind, Notting Hill Gate, W.	1	1	0
Gardner's Trust for the Blind, London	1	1	0
Henshaw's Blind Asylum, Manchester	1	1	0
Belfast Workshops for the Blind	1	1	0
Barclay Home for the Blind, Brighton	1	1	0
Royal Blind Asylum, Edinburgh	1	1	0
Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind ...	1	1	0
West of England Institution for the Blind, Exeter ...	1	1	0
British and Foreign Blind Association, London ...	1	1	0
Homes and Workshops for the Blind of Cumberland and Westmoreland ... ... —	1	1	0
Midland Institution for the Blind, Nottingham ...	1	1	0
	£23	17	0

1908, August 1st.

To Balance	12	15	11
" Sales of " Blind Aid Bills," 1908-11	4	16	4
	£17	12	3

1911, May 27th.

To balance	2	17	9

Committee for the Employment of the Blind.

PAYMENTS.

1906 to 1908.	£	s.	d.
By Printing and General Stationery	3	7	5
,, Typewriting Charges	3	15	5
,, Postage and Telephone Charges	3	18	3
,, Balance	12	15	11
	£23	17	0

1908 to 1911.	£	s.	d.
By Printing and General Stationery	3	16	6
,, Typewriting Charges	4	9	9
,, Postages and Telephone Charges	6	8	3
,, Balance	2	17	9
	£17	12	3

H. W. P. PINE, Hon. Sec.

ATTENDANCES OF MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE.

	Feb. 27th, 1909, York.	Oct. 22nd, 1909, London.	June 25th, 1910, London.	Jan. 18th, 1911, London.	Mar. 25th, 1911, London.	May 27th, 1911, London.	Total.
Mr. Henry J. Wilson (Chairman)	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
Mr. C. Hartley	a	1	a	a	a	a	1
Mr. J. H. Hewitt	a	1	a	1	1	a	3
Rev. St. Clare Hill ...	1	1	a	1	1	a	4
Mr. W. H. Illingworth ...	a	1	1	1	1	1	5
Mr. C. Macdonald	1	1	a	1	1	a	4
Mr. J. B. Meeson	1	a	a	a	a	1	2
Mr. H. E. Mullins	1	1	a	1	1	a	4
Mr. A. B. Norwood	1	1	a	a	1	1	4
Mr. M. Priestley	1	1	1	1	1	a	5
Mr. H. Stainsby	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
Mr. G. Stott	1	a	1	1	1	a	4
Mr. H. W. P. Pine (Hon. Sec.) ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
	10	11	6	10	11	6	54

THE CHAIRMAN: Will someone propose the adoption of the Report?

Moved by SIR FRANCIS CAMPBELL,

Seconded by MR. W. H. THURMAN,

"That the Report be adopted."

THE CHAIRMAN: The Report is now before you for discussion.

MR. LITTLEWOOD: Will you ask Mr. Pine for the information he referred to with regard to the Report?

MR. PINE (Nottingham): All I have to say in supplement to the Report is this: that it is stated that two meetings have been held by the new Committee appointed to consider the necessity for Government aid, and if they found it necessary, to draft a new Bill. The Committee have held two meetings, and given careful consideration to the matter, and have determined to draft a Bill, and Mr. A. L. Lowe, (the Chairman of the Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind,) who is a lawyer, and is a member of the Committee, very kindly undertook to draft instructions to counsel for the preparation of a new Bill. I should like to pay a tribute of praise to him for his most valuable work in this connection. He has prepared the instructions and they have since been considered by several members on behalf of England and also of Scotland, and they have now been placed in Mr. Lowe's hands, to be sent to a member in London who is in with a parliamentary draftsman, a counseller; and a Bill is now, I believe, under preparation. I have not heard from Mr. Lowe recently how the matter now stands, but I understand that the instructions are now placed in Counsel's hands.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does anyone wish to say anything?

MR. GREGORY (London): I should like to ask Mr. Pine if the Employment Committee would be much damaged if someone were substituted for Mr. Hartley, who only attended once. Could not another person be appointed who might be able to attend more often?

MR. W. H. TATE (Bradford): I rise not to move the election of the Committee just now, but I rather wish to ask, for my own information, what is the position in which these two Committees stand to each other? Supposing, for instance, that the Committee now considering the draft of the Bill come to an agreement on that matter; do they refer it to the General Employment Committee as the Bill which they propose, to be adopted by the General Com-

mittee? And if the General Employment Committee do not approve where do we stand?

THE CHAIRMAN: The National Employment Committee have dropped their Bill for the present, as many of their members are on the new Committee.

MR. TATE:— Have we handed over to this new Committee the drafting of a Bill on the question of emyloyment, and have we done with it?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. BRYDEN (Glasgow): Do I understand from that answer that the Committee we are about to appoint have nothing to do with that Bill now?

THE CHAIRMAN: No, I will ask Rev. St. Clare Hill to explain.

REV. ST. CLARE HILL (London):—When a discussion took place between the National League and the employment Committee, the matter was referred to the representatives of the various Institutions; these held a meeting, and at that meeting certain people were appointed for the purpose of drafting the Bill. The National Employment Committee, finding this a strong Committee, decided to withhold their hands for the present; but as I understand it is not yet pledged to anything that may be done by that new Committee, the Bill will come back to the National Employment Committee and be discussed again.

MR. FREW BRYDEN (Glasgow): My reason for asking was this: As I understand the Bill, it deals not only with the question of employment, but also with pensions.

A VOICE: No, no.

MR. BRYDEN: That is all right then.

MR. W. H. TATE: I apologise for rising again, but I do hope, Sir, that should this Bill come back, the overtures which were made to the Trade Council (referred to by one of the speakers as the lion and the lamb meeting)—I do hope that those overtures of friendship will be perpetuated. It is to be desired that if we have arrived at a position where our friends of the League, who are most earnest on behalf of their brethren, are getting anywhere near shaking hands with us—then I say, God speed them.

THE CHAIRMAN: I may say your remarks will be taken into consideration.

MR. GREGORY (London): Inasmuch as we have been asking the

Government to do something for us, I take the opportunity now of claiming the right to speak on this motion. I mentioned yesterday that a form of petition had been prepared, but I had not a copy with me; I have one now, and will read it with your permission.

(Mr. Gregory read the Petition to Parliament.)

I think that if we get a number of signatures, this Petition must strengthen our hands in making application to the Government for assistance. I want it to be a petition from the Blind themselves. I have sent for a number of copies and will place them at the door. Anyone can take a petition away, provided it is returned to me with signatures in about three weeks.

MR. WILSON: Perhaps I had better say I spoke to Mr. Gregory about this to-day. I did not quite hear the reading of the last paragraph; would you mind repeating it?

MR. GREGORY: It was pointed out by Mr. Wilson that it would be desirable to say, "make *more* provision," and I will see that this alteration is made.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think with this alteration there is no reason why we should not approve the Petition.

THE CHAIRMAN: With regard to the election of members of the National Committee for the Employment of the Blind, first of all you must decide how many to have on the Committee. Last time there were thirteen members.

MR. GUY CAMPBELL: I move that the number be fifteen, and that nominations be received at this meeting.

Seconded by Mr. PASSMORE.

THE CHAIRMAN: First of all let us take the voting as to whether the number be fifteen. Those in favour please signify.

(Carried).

THE CHAIRMAN: Now as to whether nominations may be sent in at this meeting; the names already sent in standing as before.

(Carried unanimously).

REV. A. TANSEY: Are ladies eligible for election?

THE CHAIRMAN: I see no reason at all why they should not be eligible.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Two ladies were put on the Employment Committee three years ago, and both withdrew: they were Miss Hornby and Miss Heywood.

THE CHAIRMAN: They may be on if their names are sent up.

The following were elected the Committee for the Employment of the Blind:

Mr. Wilson	Mr. H. W. P. Pine,
Mr. Henry Stainsby	Mr. Miles Priestley,
Rev. St. Clare Hill	Mr. G. Stott
Mr. Macdonald	Mr. C. Hewitt
Mr. Norwood	Mr. Illingworth
Mr. Gregory	Mr. W. H. Thurman
Mr. Hartley	Mr. Thomas H. Martin
Mr. C. M. Collingwood	

THE CHAIRMAN: I am sure you will like to know the result of the voting on the Conference Committee. The names of the sighted members are* :—

Miss Austin	Rev. St. Clare Hill
Mr. C. M. Collingwood	Mr. Illingworth
Mr. Norwood	Mr. H. W. P. Pine
Mr. Henry Stainsby	Mr. Miles Priestley
Mr. Henry J. Wilson	Mr. W. M. Stone

The Blind members are—

Sir Francis Campbell	Mr. Dixson
Dr. Ranger	Mr. Siddall
Mr. H. C. Warrilow	

THE CHAIRMAN: Before Mr. Pine reads the resolution referred to in the Report just now, you will remember that it was decided to have a Committee to deal with the Library and other matters. First of all I should like to ask you to suggest the number; and then I think you should, if necessary, suggest names in addition to those already handed in. I do not think a very large Committee will be advisable, but shall be glad if somebody will propose a number.

Proposed by Mr. GREGORY,

Seconded by Mr. DIXSON,

"That the Committee consist of nine members, with power to add to their number."

(**Footnote*: Owing to an error on the part of the scrutineers, the list handed in to the Chairman was slightly incorrect. The above is a corrected list in accordance with the votes of the delegates present.)

Moved by Miss AUSTIN,

Seconded by Miss BAINBRIGGE,

"That the number be twelve instead of nine."

(The resolution was withdrawn and amendment carried).

Proposed by Mr. WARRILOW,

Seconded by Rev. TANSEY,

"That one-third of the number be blind members."
(Carried).

Moved by Mr. HENRY STAINSBY,

Seconded by Mr. GUY CAMPBELL,

"That the Library Committee have power to add to their number, and to act so that the matter need not stand over until the next Conference."

(Carried).

The following were elected the Library Committee :—

Sighted—Lady Campbell		Miss Heywood
Miss Bainbrigge		Mr. Stone
Mr. H. J. Wilson		Miss A. Moon
Miss Comber		Rev. St. Clare Hill
Blind—Rev. C. E. Bolam		Dr. Ranger
Mr. Royston		Mr. Dixson

MR. H. W. P. PINE : Now, may we all unite in sending this message to the Government :—

"That this Conference of Representatives of Institutions, Societies, and Agencies, and others interested in the welfare of the Blind, assembled at Exeter, July 3rd to 8th, 1911, respectfully calls the attention of His Majesty's Government to the urgent need for the better and more general employment of the Blind of this country ; deplores the serious loss to the community and to the Blind themselves by reason of the enforced idleness of a large number of capable Blind workers, trained for the most part at the public expense, and declares its conviction that the difficult question of providing employment for the Blind cannot properly be solved without assistance from National and Municipal sources."

Seconded by Mr. GREGORY.

(Put to the meeting and carried unanimously).

THE CHAIRMAN: I have had this placed in my hands:—

Read by Mr. H. J. WILSON and adopted.

At a meeting of Members of the International Conference of the Blind, held in the Barnfield Small Hall, Wednesday, 5th June, 1911, it was resolved:—

That Messrs. Platt, Warrilow, Sterricker, Spanner, Watson, Oke, and Mrs. Guy Campbell should be a Committee to investigate the new systems for Braille music that have recently come into vogue, and that the Committee should be officially recognised by this Conference.

Mr. W. H. Tate moved the above resolution, which was seconded and put to the meeting and declared carried.

THE CHAIRMAN: In case of a vacancy occurring on the Conference Committee, I will ask for power for the Committee to fill that vacancy if necessary.

(Agreed).

MR. TATE: I take it that the Pensions Committee is now defunct.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

A vote of thanks was unanimously accorded to Mr. H. J. Wilson for presiding over the meeting.

Read by REV. ST. CLARE HILL and approved.

Barnfield Hall,

Wednesday, July 5th, 1911.

An informal meeting of Delegates and Members was held in the smaller hall on the evening of Wednesday, July 5th. Mr. St. Clare Hill was called to the chair, and Mr. Stone was asked to act as Secretary for the occasion.

On a vote being taken, it was decided that the following subjects should be discussed:—

1. An Examining Board and Certificate for Pianoforte Tuners.
2. Co-operation among Printing Houses.
3. Professions and Employments open to the highly educated.

Mr. Guy Campbell introduced the first subject, and explained his views as to the formation of an Associated Board which should set a standard of work, conduct examinations and grant certificates.

Sir Francis Campbell moved the following resolution:—

"That an Examining Board shall be established to decide upon a standard of work, examine candidates, and grant certificates of efficiency, and that to carry this resolution into effect the following be elected to form a Committee with power to add to their number from delegates of this Conference who are experts:

The Rev. St. Clare Hill, Sir Francis Campbell, Mr. W. M. Stone, Mr. Arthur Royston, Mr. Young (London). Mr. Gaul (Birmingham), Mr. Davidson (Manchester), and Mr. Guy Campbell, the latter to act as Secretary.

The resolution was seconded by Dr. Ranger and carried unanimously.

It was also resolved to report this resolution to the Conference, and ask that the action of the informal meeting be officially endorsed.

Miss Austin then spoke about the desirability of co-operation amongst the printing presses, and Mr. Stone explained the arrangement which had been come to between the British and Foreign Blind Association and the press at West Craigmillar to prevent overlapping.

Mention was made of the suggestion made by Mr. Warrilow for a depot in this country for music published abroad, and Dr. Ranger undertook to bring the matter to the notice of the British and Foreign Blind Association.

Dr. Ranger gave an extremely interesting account of the professions open to the highly educated, and Mr. Merrick gave a short account of the many uses to which Esperanto can be put, and the readiness with which it may be learned. He also made the suggestion of an interchange of pupils with foreign schools, so that those learning a modern language should have the benefit of studying the language more thoroughly.

A vote of thanks was given to Mr. St. Clare Hill for presiding.

FRIDAY MORNING.

CHAIRMAN : Sir Robert Newman, Bart.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Ladies and Gentlemen,—After having been compelled to make so many apologies for the non-attendance of various Chairmen, it gives me a considerable amount of satisfaction to be able to present you with a real, live, proper Chairman. Sir Robert Newman kindly consented some time ago to preside at this session, when Sir John Kennaway was unavailable. He has kept his promise, and I have pleasure in introducing him as your Chairman this morning.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen,—The two great objects of this Conference are, in the first place, to discuss questions affecting the blind themselves with the object of trying to better their position; and in the second place to try and enlist fresh and practical sympathy among the public at large. I lay great stress on the word "practical," because I am sure there never was a time when any right-thinking man or woman did not feel sympathetically disposed towards those who have been deprived of the blessing of sight; but still years ago many people considered that the only thing we could do towards helping the blind was to bestow upon them our sympathy and pity. This seems to be altering more and more as time goes on, and we are now realising that the state of the blind can be changed from one of helplessness and hopelessness to that of helpfulness and hopefulness. That being the case, we have before us a vast field of activity, which I feel sure that Conferences of this sort must do a great deal to stimulate and to promote.

I think that when we look back upon what the blind have done in the past, we shall realise their great activity and the great services they have rendered to the State in spite of their affliction. I do not know a picture in history more brilliant and pathetic than that of the French Prince who, out of love for his country, though totally blind, went into action in a great battle, with his horse chained to that of another horseman, so that though he could not see the enemy, he might try and strike a blow for his own country. In those days that was a mark of great patriotism and nobility of character—to delight in warfare—and

it shows very distinctly that the blind were as alive to their responsibilities as those who were more fortunate. And then, coming nearer to modern times, we must look back with gratitude to the services of the blind Postmaster-General, the late Mr. Fawcett. Time flies so quickly now that we are apt to forget things more easily than we used to do; but we must not forget that it was during his administration of the office of Postmaster-General that the parcel post was instituted.

Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, I do not propose to take up your time by making a long speech, but I will say one thing, that I think there is one very encouraging fact in respect to the times, in that we are more and more learning the responsibility we owe to each other. We find it in the treatment of the young, not only educationally, but also in the way we now attend them by way of medical inspection, and also by our treatment of the aged poor in regard to old age pensions, and I am sure we all hope that good may come of the proposals which are now being made to have some adequate insurance against genuine unemployment and sickness. But while we are sympathetic with all these in their rightful claims, I am sure we cannot overlook the blind. It seems to me that their claims for sympathy must become stronger and stronger, not only because of our pity, but also when we see more and more how usefully they can be trained and brought into such a position of independence as would have greatly surprised and astonished our forefathers.

I call upon the Honorary Secretary to make certain announcements before we commence the business of the agenda.

Mr. Collingwood: The only announcements I have to make are in connection with this evening's arrangements. The informal discussion will take place as arranged, and the subjects handed in are:—

(1) The use of the double letter in Braille.
(2) The use of the letter "Q" for "QU" in combination.
(3) Uniformity of fees in schools for blind children.
(4) Blind travellers on railways.
(5) Registration of blind workers with a view to mutual aid.
(6) Braille dead letters.
(7) The blind man and the franchise.

These subjects will be brought up at eight o'clock this evening in this Hall, and the blind themselves, by ballot or vote, will decide upon those to be dealt with.

Another meeting will be held in the smaller hall by Miss Hilda Boord, in conjunction with Mrs. Sharpe (of Torquay), with regard to

Esperanto for the Blind, in which Miss Boord is very interested. We shall be pleased to welcome all delegates, and to see anyone who is interested in the subject of Esperanto.

MR. W. H. DIXSON (Oxford): Would it be in order to-day to move something in connection with the forthcoming Conference in Australia, on January 17th next? May I be allowed to move—

> "That this Conference, met here in Exeter, sends its heartiest greetings to the Conference about to meet in Sydney (I believe it is), wishing it all good fortune and all good results."

We have sent a resolution of this kind to Japan, and I think it would be nice to send one to the British dominions over the sea.

MR. H. C. WARRILOW, F.R.C.O. (Oxford): As the Conference in Australia has been mentioned, I should like also to mention the one which is to be held in Paris at the end of this month.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is it the wish of the Conference that these messages be sent?

MR. H. E. PLATT (Birmingham): I would like to remind you of the one which is to meet in Germany.

THE CHAIRMAN: I presume there is no objection to that addition?

(Put to the meeting and carried unanimously).

THE CHAIRMAN: I will now ask the reader to introduce his paper. He will be allowed something like twenty minutes, and then it will be my pleasure to call on Mr. Tate, who will be allowed a quarter of an hour; after that the speakers will be allowed ten minutes each. I think it well to announce this at the commencement of our proceedings. I will now call upon Dr. Lundberg to give us his paper.

THE GENERAL PENSIONING OF THE BLIND,

And the Raising of National Funds as the Best Way of Solving the Pensioning Problem.

By Mr. Alrik Lundberg,

President of the Swedish Federation of the Blind.

Ever since the days of Valentin Haiiy the blind have been the object of kindly sympathy and practical solicitude with a number of earnest-minded and clear-sighted philanthropists. His watchword through life was in the words of Holy Writ "Let there be light," and with them as his guiding star, his life, consecrated to work for the blind, became itself a beacon revealing to others the path that would lead out of the darkness of centuries. In other words, his efforts made it clear that education, intellectual and practical, was the first essential requirement previous to any step forward being taken on the road towards emancipation and the enabling of the blind to take their part in the work and struggles of the community at large.

The progress made since his day is remarkable, and the work accomplished has been very considerable. The past century was, as it were, the breaking of the dawn of a new day, but the question now is, what does that new day demand of us? The past century gave us light; the present one must bring us bread. What we have now got to concentrate our exertions upon is the means of securing the highest attainable amount of material welfare for the greatest possible number of our blind friends. As we all

know, the efforts already put forth for attaining this eagerly longed-for goal have yielded many valuable results, but we are nevertheless forced to admit that much—far too much—yet remains to be done before a firm basis has been laid, upon which it shall be possible to erect a structure of solid security for the future well-being of the blind. In my opinion that firm basis is only to be found in the provision of pensions at a uniform rate for all blind persons, the sum requisite being furnished, or at any rate guaranteed by the several Governments.

The dictates of humanity teach us that blindness constitutes a just claim to support in the form of a pension from public sources. The blind, as individuals, are not *mauvais sujets*, not social failures; they are physical invalids, neither more nor less; moreover seeing that the laws of accident insurance in force in all civilised countries treat those who have accidentally lost their sight while at work as total invalids, and consequently entitled to receive the highest indemnity, the community ought to compensate in some appropriate form all other blind persons for the loss they have sustained in capacity for work owing to their infirmity. Private employers of labour, who are under the obligation to care for their workpeople when injured in their employ, protect themselves against heavy loss on that score by means of insurance. Is it not incumbent on the community, the State, to be likewise far-seeing enough to ward off the sad consequences of the rise and growth of a blind proletariat?

I speak here of the State as the supreme protector of the unfortunate. I do so because I do not perceive any other authority capable of solving the problem of making necessary provision for the Blind in a satisfactory fashion. Parochial relief, I must point out, is almost as alien to modern conceptions of true philanthropy as the alms have long since appeared, that were bestowed upon the beggar at the Church door in the Middle Ages. Parochial relief is both humiliating

in its form and unjust in its distribution, since the varying resources of the different parishes lead to great inequality; it is, moreover, always insufficient in amount, and cannot but be demoralising in its effects, more especially in those numerous cases where blind persons are constrained to seek refuge even in early life among the unfortunate inmates of the Union Workhouse. Parochial relief, even though in the dark ages of the past it may have formed a not unwelcome species of support to the blind, has nowadays, I am tempted to assert, become quite the reverse, rendering, indeed, blindness well nigh intolerable. The assistance rendered in various forms by private charitable institutions or societies is by far to be preferred from several points of view, but its range is necessarily limited, taking effect upon a small number only; in spite of all readiness to contribute evidenced by the public, private charity can never be anything but a temporary palliative.

Let me now put before you a few outline sketches from life, which, though painted in black colours, have the merit of being true.

The average indigent blind youth, on leaving school, enters upon life full of hopeful anticipations—but what is the experience he meets with? Difficulties, obstacles and troubles of various kinds beset his path. He may have parents, relatives, some sort of a home; if, however, from lack of money, or other cause, he is insufficiently supplied with remunerative work, and is also handicapped by physical debility, often a concomitant of blindness, his position will be gradually undermined. In a home where daily deprivations have dulled the senses to misfortune and induced callousness and insensibility, where probably no intelligent understanding of his special needs will be forthcoming, he will sooner or later come to be regarded merely as a burden, as a useless member of the family and of society—a deplorable lot indeed. Suppose, again, that after leaving school he has

no home to go to. The small endowment he will probably have received from the school in the shape of materials, implements, etc., will not last him long. He may, perhaps, be fortunate enough to obtain a berth in a workshop of the usual international type, not providing him with lodging, those with such accommodation being the exception, not the rule. Under these circumstances he will at best earn a wage sufficient for his daily expenses, food and clothing; the monthly or weekly or quarterly demands for rent he will be unable to meet, and they will cause constant trouble and anxiety, becoming as time goes on a veritable Damocles' sword above his head. In spite, therefore, of all his courage and confidence at the start, the bitter struggle for life will soon show signs of exhausting his strength, even though his position in some respects is not an unfavourable one; and before long there will be wrenched from his grasp that most valuable of a man's weapons—his moral energy.

Again, to take another example, we may find our blind friend starting as a handicraftsman on his own account. He is perhaps a skillful and industrious workman, and succeeds in obtaining some good customers. Keen competition, however, with sighted tradesmen soon makes him realize the necessity of having some money at his command, to enable him to purchase materials in advance, so as to be in a position to keep a stock of his productions in hand. In this case, as well as in the ones previously spoken of, the urgent need of some reliable support for the Blind inevitably manifests itself, all the sooner and all the more perceptibly, if there is a home to be kept together, or if illness or other mishap befals. There is no lack either of other examples of a similar character. The fact is, the average blind person, whether man or woman, no matter what profession or trade he may have taken up, lives, as things are now, in a state of insecurity, unreasonably hard and oppressive, which moreover in many cases drives him downwards, and tempts him into

seeking at random some easier mode of subsistence, which means that he will shortly be found swelling the ranks of the unfortunate army of street musicians, wayside beggars, and drunkards. Who can indeed follow in thought the downward career of those ill-fated beings through sorrows and trials innumerable to a final condition of utter misery? I feel sure, for my part, that many of those who form an integral part of the blind proletariat might have become, or as the case may be, have remained, useful members of society, had but society given them timely support.

I am not myself one of those that aver that public provision for the blind, in the form of pensions, will prove a remedy for all the ills incident to blindness; I do maintain, however, that a uniform benefit of the kind proposed would lift the heaviest part of their burdens off the shoulders of thousands and thousands of blind persons, and that this State granted pension would undoubtedly place the Blind everywhere on a higher plane morally and socially, as well as economically.

On account of the large sum involved for a scheme of public provision, the amount of the pension would have to be fixed at a comparatively low figure; for the purpose of avoiding the difficulty inseparable from any attempt at gradation, it would be necessary to determine from the start that the amount should be uniform for all. As already stated, the principal object of this State aid is to provide a solid basis, a fundamental guarantee for each recipient, upon which he may build further by his own efforts. Consequently there will be plenty of scope left for private charity to discharge its beneficial work in supplementing, at will, as it may see fit the public aid, so as to meet the special needs of more deserving cases. In my opinion, it would be prudent and suitable to fix the pension amount, with due regard to the financial conditions and possibilities of the various countries, at a figure not exceeding £13. In a scheme for

pensioning the Blind that has been brought forward in Sweden, and which was referred by the Government at the beginning of the present year to the Royal Commission now engaged in preparing a measure for providing invalidity insurance and old age pensions, the suggested amount for each Blind person to receive is 200 Swedish crowns, *i.e.* about £11. In passing, it may be mentioned that a similar proposition was recently made public in Denmark.

The age at which the right to receive a pension would accrue, is tentatively fixed at 21 years of age. In order to arrive at an estimate of the number of beneficiaries under the scheme, we may make the following deductions from the total number of Blind in, for instance, Sweden; first of all the minors; then those upwards of 65, since they will probably be entitled before long to old age pensions; further, a certain number for undeserving cases, and about 3 per cent for those in well-to-do circumstances. The remainder may be calculated at about 2000, *i.e.* half the total number. On the supposition, which seems a fair one, that the proportion of beneficiaries under the proposed pension scheme to the entire body of the Blind, turns out to be the same for every civilised country, viz.: one half of the total number of Blind in that country, I am not, I trust, making too bold to hope that those friends of the Blind, who have hitherto shrunk from accepting the idea of a general pensioning scheme from considerations of expense, will not henceforth look upon it merely in the light of a Utopian dream.

If we agree on this main point, such questions as those of a judicious administration, and a just discrimination amongst the applicants for pensions, will not offer any insurmountable difficulties. There has been much debating of the queries: "Who are to receive pensions and who are to be excluded?" I wonder if the opponents of the general pensioning scheme do not give themselves too much trouble in searching for the undeserving cases, and dwelling on

them. As a result they are wont to argue that pensions tend to spoil people's characters by reducing their energy and making them idle. This apprehension might perhaps be justified, if the amount of the pension were large enough to admit of the beneficiary subsisting on it without working. The state pension, however, that I am pleading for, is scarcely to be regarded as providing its holder with a bed of roses, inviting him to indulge in a dolce far niente sort of existence, but on the contrary is calculated rather to act as a spur to greater effort, seeing that the Blind as a rule, just like the sighted, have a laudable ambition to improve the condition in which they live. Thus to the category of undeserving cases there are only to be referred habitual drunkards and the irreclaimably depraved, *i.e.* those in whom no radical alteration is to be expected or looked for, even if they were to receive a pension, owing to the hold their irregular life has got upon them. According to the principles I advocate, no subtle, more or less artificial restrictions and disqualifications will come into consideration, seeing that every respectable blind person will be entitled to enjoy the pension, and all preference of one to another will be wholly excluded. The very difficult and delicate point as to whether the intermarried blind should be allowed the pension or not must be decided, so far as I can see, in each individual case upon its own merits.

After having thus established the general principles upon which an appropriate state pension system may be organised, I must now proceed to examine the ways and methods to be adopted for raising national trust funds for the purpose in the several countries. As both laws and sentiments are found to differ very widely, when one country is compared with others, it is rather a difficult task to draw up any common scheme. In countries, however, where lotteries are sanctioned it would seem as if they might suitably be resorted to as a simple and rational mode of collecting the

sum required. If each beneficiary is to receive £12 per annum, the capital requisite, if interest is reckoned at 3 per cent., would be £400; consequently for each thousand of the blind a capital of £400,000 would have to be furnished. If the profits or yield of a lottery are reckoned as equal to one-fourth of the total value of the tickets issued, a lottery with an issue of tickets for £1,600,000 would suffice to provide 1,000 pensions.

As regards England, with its vast army of about 20,000 blind pensioners, a lottery with an annual issue of tickets to the value of £1,600,000 for twenty years would yield the required amount, if the above computation holds good. In England, however, as well as in other financially well endowed countries, the project might be carried into effect completely in a much shorter space of time. In countries where public sentiment is strongly opposed to lotteries, even when set on foot for charitable purposes, a national subscription on a grand scale might be got up under the auspices of the Government as the ultimate administrators of the fund. Seeing that compassion with the sightless and interest in their welfare are nowadays very widespread, we may see in that an essential factor promising success to the scheme. That method of collecting means for other national objects, whether charitable or cultural, has before now proved advantageous; thus, to cite one instance, in Sweden, with its relatively small resources, the sum of 3,000,000 Swedish crowns, *i.e.* nearly £200,000, was collected in a few months by public subscription to support the anti-tuberculosis campaign. Though, in my opinion, the accumulation of a capital sum once for all is most desirable from several points of view, I cannot deny that there is a choice of other forms, which perhaps may appear to some economists more attractive or convenient, One might think, for instance, of the ordinary mode of procuring money for State purposes, viz., taxation. It would not probably be a matter involving

much trouble to find out in any particular country some article of luxury that might be deemed eligible for bearing a tax so as to render the lot of those doomed to walk in darkness all their lives a trifle less irksome. Another mode of obtaining the sum required would be to adopt the device well known in France of issuing Premium Bonds, which combine the attractions of a lottery with those of an investment. Finally, I may call attention to a scheme made public in a paper read at the Blind Conference at Vienna, in 1910. Herr Schmidt suggested, in the said paper, that an obligatory blindness insurance, might be introduced, the premium to be paid once for all by parents on the birth of a child unto them at rates progressively proportioned to their financial standing. On the basis of the European average nativity numeral, a mean premium of five shillings per child would be sufficient for raising the pension fund required. The scheme presents, it must be acknowledged, certain attractive features; thus it would insure, at a small initial expense, a guarantee for the child against absolute destitution, should the serious infliction of blindness befall it.

After these few words concerning how to procure means for attaining our great object, I desire to complete my suggestions on the subject of this paper by earnestiy exhorting the esteemed members of this International Conference to be sure and see to it that in those countries where the great questions of invalidity and old age insurance are now being debated, the claims of the blind be not lost sight of in connection therewith.

It now only remains for me to indicate the outlines of a scheme for administering a pension fund, such as the one here proposed. The suggested uniformity in amount of the pensions will greatly simplify the work of administration. What will be required is a central bureau under a Superintendent Board composed of the following categories of members in suitable proportions :—Nominees of the Govern-

ment, Managers of the Chief Blind Institutions, Philanthropists and Blind Experts. Travelling Inspectors will be required to collect materials for a National Register, containing the name, condition, and a short biography of each blind person who is eligible to become a beneficiary. If considered suitable or requisite, the Central Bureau will organise a number of local sub-committees or appoint so called blind consuls, whose chief function it will be thoroughly to investigate special cases and also to do duty as local intermediaries. In order not too much to complicate the work of disbursing the pensions, it would be well to stipulate for them to be paid quarterly, or possibly monthly, but preferably not at shorter intervals.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the scheme that I have had the honour of bringing before your notice does not lay claim to being a cut and dried one admitting of no modification; in the form in which I have laid it before you, however, it is the result of more than twenty years' labour for, and on behalf of the blind, and I think I may confidently say that it has been prompted and inspired by my ardent desire to promote the just cause of the blind, in the ultimate triumph of which I have unbounded and unfailing faith.

Mr. W. H. Tate (Bradford): Mr. Chairman,—I regret that it should fall to my lot to stand in place of one more competent to speak on this question of pensions—Mr. Stuart Johnson. His recent labours have been so arduous, and his knowledge of the subject is so direct, practical, and exhaustive, that I cannot say the little I have to say without expressing regret that we are not to have the advantage of his contribution to this discussion.

I would offer to Mr. Lundberg my warmest thanks for the suggestive statement he has put before us, and the excellent case he has presented in favour of State aid by way of pensions. His point of view is a little startling, in that he places pensions as the *first item* in the ameliorative treatment of the blind. Mr. Lundberg's remark on page 50, where he says "I am not myself one of those that aver that public provision for the blind in the form of pensions will prove a remedy for all the ills incident to blindness," is reassuring, however; and this being granted, one can approach Mr. Lundberg's paper with the desire to assist to the utmost his efforts to promote the scheme he has in hand. In Sweden, Denmark, and elsewhere, it would appear that pensions do not exist to the extent that they do in this country, and it would be interesting to learn as to the conditions abroad, say in Germany—where Herr Reusch told us pensions have been in operation for a few years—how far the system operates beneficially, and whether the bestowal of pensions early in a blind man's career acts as a stimulant or as a sedative. If there are delegates also present from Reading in England (where I believe pensions are regarded as the chief object of local effort) it would be interesting to hear how the system operates there.

In this country, teaching, training, and employment have been regarded as the first requisites towards providing adequate maintenance, and in cases where, through sickness or other infirmity, the earning of a sufficient maintenance becomes an impossibility, pensions should follow. That necessarily involves classification, and as we heard yesterday from the Report of the Committee of Pensions, we have not got very far as to classification in relation to universal blind pensions. I am strongly in favour of pensions from the earliest date possible, in cases that require them, and unfortunately there are many such. As I speak to you, there comes before me the picture of a bedroom in Yorkshire, in which lies an invalid who, when a little maid of seventeen, leaving school, was one of our most promising music pupils. Within a very few months afterwards she was in Leeds Infirmary, a tumour of some kind having begun to develop on the brain. From that time to the present (about seven years) she has lain on a bed of suffering night

and day, and is one of those cases where a pension is indispensable, and should come into operation at once.

My time is short, and I do not wish to inflict other cases upon you, though there are many who, when everything has been done for them that can be, will require charitable assistance, such as has been put before you by Mr. Lundberg.

If the scheme suggested on page 50 is the best for Sweden, I am sure that this Conference will approve, and send to the fellow-workers of Mr. Lundberg in Sweden a message of goodwill, wishing them all success in their work for the blind of that country.

We hope much from the Sickness and Invalidity Bill shortly to be brought before Parliament, and the claims of the blind should not be lost sight of in this connection. When that measure has been adopted, coupled with the magnificent provision already made by private charity, we shall be near the achievement of the objects Mr. Lundberg has in view. Our hope, however, is that we shall not render the blind merely recipients, but shall go forward until we have enabled some, at any rate, to become benefactors to the sighted. We have an illustration in Mr. Lundberg himself of the splendid attainments of memory, skill, culture, and eloquence of which a blind person may become capable. The speeches of many of the blind delegates during this Conference have been excellent, but the address of Mr. Lundberg has in no sense been eclipsed by them, and I venture to think that one of the happiest memories we shall take away from Exeter will be the remembrance of Mr. Lundberg and his magnificent speech.

In order that Mr. Lundberg may go to Sweden and report to his Government upon the Pensions Schemes already established in England for the benefit of the blind, I will ask him to accept a copy of the work, "Annuities for the Blind," which Mr. Stuart Johnson has recently printed for the help of Societies in this country. Although it makes no reference to Swedish affairs, it will at least reinforce him in his appeal to the Swedish Government, enabling him to say, "See what is done in England!" I therefore have pleasure in presenting to him, on behalf of Mr. Johnson, a copy of the book.

MR. H. J. WILSON (London): Mr. Chairman: Ladies and Gentlemen I am sure you will all agree that we have witnessed this morning a very extraordinary effort of memory, and it has been all the more remarkable because Mr. Lundberg spoke in what is to him a foreign language. I say "effort of memory" because I was watching him carefully, and although he had a copy of his paper in Braille, he did not once refer to it.

I only wish to touch on one or two points in the paper. I had my say on this subject at the last Conference.

First of all as to lotteries. Mr. Lundberg you will remember, mentions this system as a means of raising money. Well, to put it very briefly I think I am right in saying that it is not only illegal in England, but contrary to the national mind on the subject.

As to a national subscription under the auspices of the Government, I am afraid I have not the slightest hope of such a scheme. We must always remember that there are the deaf, the imbeciles and others, with equal claims to a like subscription.

Then comes the point of too much stress being laid on undeserving cases. I hope I do not spend too much time at my office in seeking for the undeserving cases; my whole time is taken up in trying to help the deserving ones; but I must repeat emphatically what I said at the last Conference, that I do not consider blindness *per se* to be sufficient recommendation for a pension but that conduct, thrift and other circumstances must be taken into consideration.

With regard to Travelling Inspectors referred to by Mr. Lundberg; as soon as a Central Bureau is started I think the Unions will have information ready for them, for that is the work they are now doing—getting particulars about the Blind.

The main reason for my rising to-day is to give you a few statistics about pensions for the Blind—statistics which have been kindly drawn up for me by those able hardworking ladies who are doing such good work for the blind in a quiet and unostentatious manner little known beyond their personal friends. The figures are taken from the standard book on pensions brought out by Mr. Stuart Johnson, to whom we owe a deep debt of gratitude. Few know the amount of labour, time and expense freely and willingly given by Mr. Johnson solely in the interest of the blind, in producing this book. It is impossible to give you exact figures owing to the incessant changes, but I venture to think there could be no better basis for getting out statistics than Mr. Johnson's invaluable book. I quote these figures to controvert the extravagant statements made that there has been sufficient money left for the Blind, if lumped together, to give every one of them an adequate pension. The figures are as follows:—

Total annual amount received by Pension Societies £50,747 13s.
Total number of pensions 5880.
Do. pensioners 4473.

This shows that 1407 pensioners receive more than one pension. The average amount received in pensions by each individual is almost £11 7s.

I wish to say in regard to the £50,747 that thirteen charities are wholly dependent on subscriptions. Now if the money were lumped together a large portion of that which is now subscribed would disappear because it is given locally and through mutual friends. There are six charities chiefly or partly dependent upon subscriptions. Take for instance the Royal Blind Pension Society; the total amount dispensed in pensions is £10,931, and out of that no less than £8993 is subscribed.

The National Blind Relief Society also practically derives all its income from subscriptions, and the Society for granting annuities to the Poor Adult Blind, which dispenses £2483 in pensions receives £1848 by way of subscriptions.

I think this clearly proves that if the money were all put together in one fund it would even then be absolutely impossible to provide pensions for every blind person.

Mr. C. W. Harris (Newport): Mr. Chairman,—When I sent up my paper rather early, I hardly anticipated having to come forward so soon and follow so closely after such experts on pension matters as the gentlemen we have just heard. There has been during this Conference a desire on the part of so many to speak, that I felt I must send my paper up soon, as I was anxious to say a few words on this important subject on account of the little experience I have had among some of the blind in Monmouthshire, and during that experience I have been convinced that there is a great demand for some scheme of State Aid. I have in mind particularly the adult blind who lose their sight late in life.

We have had during this Conference discussions on the treatment, care and so on of the younger blind in Institutions, but throughout the Conference it seems to me it has been apparent that there exists at the present time a great demand for something more substantial to be done for the help of the adult blind, and I think that it is to that class of blind that the State Aid, if it comes into operation, will be of the greatest benefit. Remember, delegates and friends of the blind, that a large number of those who lose their sight in mature life are married men with wives and families to support, and have had their living taken away through the loss of sight. Although they have been members of friendly Societies, their sick benefit pay soon drops to perhaps half-a-crown a week. Now I was glad to notice that in this matter there is unity among us. We are, I believe, agreed that State Aid in some form or another is desirable and I think now we have advanced a great step forward compared to what we were a few years ago when we have come

to the stage that we are united in the opinion that some scheme of State Aid for the blind is desirable. With regard to matters of detail, we do not go into those. We want first to establish the principle. Is the principle of State Aid desirable? Is it required by the blind? And where ought it to begin? I think we are now agreed on these main points, and we are I feel, a little too much inclined to pay attention to the details of the scheme. Let us go then, convinced that there is a need for a scheme to be put in operation for State Aid for the blind.

It seems to me undesirable and unreasonable that a blind person when he is working should have, as he has to-day, to compete against sighted labour for his very existence. Now I believe that work for the blind is desirable. It is best for an individual to work, and I would be the last to take a step which would take any occupation away from a blind person. I believe he is better in health and spirits when he has work to do; but I am quite in accordance with the first speaker when he says it is with the hope that something better will come—some State Aid or benevolent help in some form or another, so that when he is working he will have the satisfaction that something is backing him up, and that something will be an incentive for him to do better. Many blind persons lose hope altogether because they cannot raise themselves to a sufficient degree of hope that they can earn enough for their necessities, because of the strain that is put on their brain, and the difficulties of disposing of their goods, etc., they lose hope, and say it is no use to try.

Now I believe that if some scheme as has been advocated is put into operation, it will inspire every blind person who has self-respect, with new hope, a new desire to live a profitable, industrious and better life.

With regard to the detail of the scheme, it has occurred to me that the means might be obtained by the Chancellor of the Exchequer by the utilization of the budget surpluses which occur from year to year; it sometimes happens, I think, that they do not know where to put the one, two or three million surplus. Why could not, from year to year, some amount of this budget surplus be allocated to the formation of a sum of money which would be sufficient for pensions for the blind?

I will not keep you longer, because there may be others who wish to say something on this subject.

Miss Sadgrove (North of England Union of Societies for the Blind) Mr. Chairman,—As no resolution has been passed, I should like to ask whether it is in accordance with your wishes that a recommendation should be sent to Guardians of the Poor, suggesting that they should give more parish relief to the blind because of their affliction, so that

without pensions they will not find it so hard to live. So frequently they are given very small relief, and then when the time comes they cannot get a pension because they have had that relief, and they are in very poor circumstances. I hope you will see your way to send this recommendation, as it will help the blind very much.

Mr. Frew Bryden (Glasgow): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I think I am simply stating a fact when I say that we have not yet put before our Conferences a concrete scheme which touches the mass of the blind in the community as this paper does. I am glad that this is so, because I am afraid that the criticism might be made about a good many of our discussions that, while there is no doubt they are educative, they are often academic, and the point we have reached now, after about nine years or so of Conferences, is that we can utilise the education and the discussions we have had to put into concrete form some such scheme as has been brought forward to-day. This being so, I welcome the paper.

We have had put before us for the first time in a lucid way a definite claim for State aid in connection with this matter of pensions. I am glad that this is so, not only because of the importance of the question of State aid, but because it will enable us to do as we have not yet done—to look at the question in its relationship to what exists in the way of benevolent help. It seems to me that the statement Mr. Wilson has submitted makes it abundantly clear that with the large mass of the blind—many of whom are equally entitled to pensions with those at present drawing them—philanthropic effort is not meeting, and cannot meet, the needs. This is getting so much impressed upon us, that it is making some of us, who perhaps look a little askance at State aid in the form of pensions, more ready to accept and even to welcome it.

Now I do not need to say that in dealing with this matter the question of party politics should not enter into it. I wish to say that for this reason, that I am afraid—in fact I am sure—that some efforts that have been made by the National League of the Blind have been looked at with suspicion because they seemed to have a political complexion. Now I think the National League is itself responsible for people coming to such a conclusion; but I am glad those representing the National League of the Blind are now seeing that this question of State aid for the blind must be looked at in a broad way.

As I have already said, it is apparent that philanthropic schemes cannot meet the case; may I say further that I should not like a State scheme to be proposed which would swallow up the existing agencies

for philanthropic aid. I trust that whatever scheme may ultimately be agreed upon by Government—for I am sure that something will come of all this—that those Societies which have invested funds, and have been working on benevolent lines, will not be absorbed, but that they will be left free to adjust themselves to the new state of things, and I am sure that in course of time a natural adjustment will take place. Now I think that there will be a distinct place for such philanthropic organisations in future in this way—that if a scheme of State aid be introduced there will still be room for these Societies to raise the condition of the blind, and to assist them, not simply to a living existence (for we feel that State aid can do no more than that), but to raise them to something better. Just realise how much sixpence or a shilling a week means to these people. I shall never forget one illustration in connection with our work. We give pensions up to the extent of £500 a year in the West of Scotland. There was a case of a woman in a country village; she had 2/6 a week, and a lady gave her sufficient to pay the rent. When a pension of 2/6 a week was granted from our Society her income was thus doubled, and tears of gratitude were streaming from her eyes. We all feel that not only the blind, but all who are physically handicapped, should be put in a position to get something of increased comfort.

One word further. And here perhaps some of the very zealous among our blind friends may think I am throwing cold water on what I have already said. I am quite sure that the difficulty with many in regard to receiving favourably State aid schemes dealing specially with the blind is this, that there are large numbers in our community who are in other ways physically handicapped, if not as much, yet nearly as much as the blind; and it seems to me (and I throw this out as a suggestion) that it might be worth considering whether some scheme could be evolved dealing with the physically handicapped generally, in which the blind would also participate.

I will now only say again that I welcome this concrete statement that has been put before us by Mr. Lundberg, and I trust that we shall all be broad-minded enough to look at this question apart altogether from politics, and recognise that there is a reasonableness in the argument that those who are blind or otherwise physically handicapped should be helped by the State, and in such a way as will not interfere with any additional uplifting, by all that philanthropy can possibly do.

Mr. J. P. Kruger (South Africa): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I wish, like the other speakers, to give my thanks to Mr.

Lundberg for the practical paper he has put before us this morning, and I hope that something practical will result from it.

While I am in favour of State Aid for the blind by way of pensions, I personally think that in the case of young blind children who have a career before them, pensions should not be given, but they should be helped in another form—they should be educated, but not given money; I think it would demoralise them. But people who lose their sight late in life, it seems to me, have a claim upon the State, whichever their country or nation may be. I think such as these have a right to a pension. I have come in contact recently with a sad case in London. While I was walking along the street my stick came into contact with a soft object, and I found there was a man sitting on the pavement. He said, "I guess you walked against me because you are blind like myself." I said, "That is a fact—I was keeping away from the lamp-posts." I asked him why he sat there without anything to do. He said he had lost his sight a few years ago. I asked him why he had not learnt a trade, and he said, "If you ask the authorities they send you to the workhouse." I said, "No, they will give you work." He said, "At the Institutions for the Blind I have to pay, and I have a wife and children." On my asking him what he was doing, he said he was selling matches, and his wife cleaned a Church. In such a case, where a big black stroke is drawn through a man's life, when he has been earning money and can do so no longer, then the State should come to his assistance. I should be so glad if one of the London Societies will ask me, and I will give them particulars of that man; he is sitting there and says he cannot get work. I shall be glad to give this information to someone who will move in the matter. I think in such cases it is not only right that the State should help, but private charity as well.

There may be a difficulty in procuring State Aid for the blind. As Mr. Wilson remarked so aptly, there are people with other infirmities who may be considered to have an equal claim upon State Aid, and if there is too much State aid we know that the other philanthropic societies will relax their efforts. But still I agree with the principle of it.

In South Africa we have no pensions for the blind as yet, but what the State does is to subsidise the Institutions for the Blind, and help them to have a free education. They are enabled to go free until the authorities of the school consider them competent to go and earn their living with whatever work they may have been taught; and I think that is a very sound basis to work upon, because it will be a hard nut

to crack—this question of general pensions for the blind. I feel sure of this, although I am not a great pessimist. Personally I shall hail the day, when it does come, for those who need it, but not for the able-bodied.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen, I take this opportunity, as it will be the last time I shall speak in this hall—and I venture to hope that the Chairman will forgive me for the deviation—to thank all the members of the Conference, all the friends of the blind (blind as well as sighted) who have been good to me at this Conference and given me information. I wish to thank them all from this platform for their readiness in giving me information I asked for, and for promising more information whenever I wanted it. And I wish to thank everybody who has given me a friendly handshake. Six thousand miles is a long way to come, but I am very glad that I came, and I go away from this Conference, and from this historic town of Exeter, with great inspiration for my work. I am glad to know that the descriptions of the country which I have read in books, such as "Lorna Doone," were not exaggerated. The people have been most kind to me while I have been here.

Rev. St. Clare Hill (Leatherhead): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I should like first of all to add my appreciation of that wonderful exhibition of skill which the reader of the paper gave this morning. I do not think I ever saw anything which impressed me so much as his feat of memory, as his power of putting spirit into his words, which could scarcely have been expected from one speaking in his own language.

I present myself to you because I represent one of the large Societies giving pensions to the Blind; and may I say that the conviction that exists in my mind is not one which has come to me to-day; it has been there a long time, and it was called into existence because I know the inner working of these Societies which grant pensions. There are many highly deserving blind people who cannot get pensions at the present time. One of the most terrible things for an Honorary Secretary, such as I am, to see, is the details of the cases before us and to have to say "few of these, or at least nothing like a due proportion, can expect to get pensions."

Mr. Wilson referred to the insufficient pensions in the country; I should like to add my testimony by saying that, leaving out the question of universal pensions, there is a considerable insufficiency to meet the cases. Where a pension ought to be given because of the highly

deserving conditions, it seems to me that whatever be our opinions, and whatever our limitations in regard to the matter of State Aid, the whole question is thrust aside in dealing with pensions. Dr. Ranger, in his most able and striking speech, called attention to the fact that a blind person has certain limitations. Blindness is a deduction. It does seem to me that by granting a large and generous pension to a man who is blind, we are meeting and relieving that handicap with which he has to live among his confreres in the world. I am looking forward to the time when we may have some means, through the State, of granting pensions to the Blind, and at the same time (as Mr. Bryden said) leaving space for the supplement of that, in cases where voluntary help is necessary.

I have only one other word to say. Miss Sadgrove referred to the question of trying to get the Guardians to deal more generously with blind people whose cases come before them, and especially in cases where a person cannot get a pension because he has received parish relief. I should be very pleased indeed if something could be done to press this matter. It is difficult to get to the Guardians, but I do think we could find some organ in this Conference by means of which such a word could go out to the Guardians, in order that they may be induced to be more generous than they are. Perhaps I ought to say the reason why in the various Societies there are limitations, is that there are not enough pensions to go round, and we have to find those applicants who have the greatest claims. If we can meet that position by insisting upon the Guardians dealing more generously with the Blind, then the Societies will be relieved from those rules which in some cases press more heavily than they ought to do. I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that somebody be asked to do something to give effect to Miss Sadgrove's excellent suggestion.

Mr. Guy Campbell: I suggest that it be done through the Unions. That seems a proper organisation for such work.

Mr. Gribben (Paisley): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—We have had this morning the first note of warning against party politics in matters pertaining to the blind. I think that that is not a compliment. I am not afraid of British politicians, but I do confess that I am afraid of the sighted experts in matters pertaining to the blind, and I am rather inclined to pray with someone who had once so to pray before: "The Lord save us from our friends." I have heard, Ladies and Gentlemen, that an English soldier fights best on a good dinner. I have heard that an Irish man fights best when he is half tipsy, and that

a Scotchman fights best when hungry. Now it seems to me there are some here who imagine that all blind people must have this Scotch characteristic, and will not work unless faced with absolute starvation. Why trouble yourselves about the moral effect that a pension of £12 a year would have? Do you think it will form a bloated aristocracy? Do you think that the recipients of this munificent sum will feed on chickens and drink champagne, and become too lazy and too fat to work? I have been looking particularly into the report which Mr. Stainsby read, and I think there are some things there to humble experts in affairs of the blind, and make them a little chary with regard to some hard things said about the blind. I find, for example, that our existing system of Institutions, costing thousands and thousands of pounds annually, result in about 20 per cent. of the employable blind earning about 12/- a week. Now suppose you add 5/- a week to this, and make it 17/-. Then suppose you add the private philanthropy you are so anxious to preserve; the whole would not amount to more than a pound a week. And, Ladies and Gentlemen, do not insult the blind by thinking that they are as a rule worthless creatures, and that the chief object of those who dispense charity is to see that they are not taken in by the blind. If you had to get along on the same income as some of the blind, it may sharpen your wits, and you might even try to overreach the sharp secretaries of some of the Pension Societies.

I do not want to take up your time, but I must regret a little that it falls to my lot to say unpopular things. A blind gentlemen at the concert wanted to know who I was. He said "Are you not the wicked Scotchman?" I had to confess that I was. Well if what I have said this morning entitles me to be known by the title of "the wicked Scotchman," I am willing to go back to Scotland with it.

Miss Mary Gordon-Burnett (Reading): I wlsh to thank Mr. Lundberg for his paper, His words are such as make a philanthropic history. The Conference has been magnificently interesting, but those of us who are interested in the outdoor blind feel that the Unions have not had sufficient prominence given to their work. They ought to be encouraged for two reasons: one is that the work of the splendid managers of these Institutions is entirely lost if the outdoor blind are not cared for by the Unions or some other Society, and in the second place because the Unions are the children of the Edinburgh Conference. I believe that the Edinburgh Conference inspired the smaller Conference held in Manchester, from which we trace the Unions. If I am wrong I am open to correction, but I beseech Conference to

remember that the Unions are one of the most promising children of the work they are doing for the blind, and at the next Conference I hope there will be a great deal of sympathy expressed for their work. I much regret that the Hon. Secretary of the Reading Blind Aid Society, Mr. Walford, is unable to be present here, for I feel I am a very incompetent representative of Reading, as I have only recently gone there. But I am the only representative, and feel bound to rise on this occasion. Mr. Walford has devoted eighteen years to the uplifting of the indigent blind, and has succeeded. There are no blind beggars in the town; until recently there was one who sat on the ground belonging to the station, and he could not be removed because that was private property. He has now retired, and we can say, without exception, that there is no blind beggar on the streets of Reading.

The blind community of Reading is self-respecting and is respected. I should like also to say that in all cases where it is possible for the outdoor blind to work, they are encouraged to do so. We have no large workshops, but there are some small workshops connected with the homes of individuals. I should like also to say that a Coronation Pension has been raised in Reading this year, and that the blind themselves have contributed nearly £5 to that pension. A blind man went from house to house and collected subscriptions, which were gladly given.

Mr. W. H. Dixson (Oxford): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—Seeing that there are 250 members of this Conference, I feel almost ashamed of having spoken so many times, but I think there are a few considerations that have not yet been brought before the Conference on this subject.

Mr. Frew Bryden has spoken about our discussions being somewhat academic. Yes, I think they have been, and I would like to suggest one means of dealing with that difficulty. If in each Conference we have one paper on a purely academic question, then when we come to the more practical questions we can dispense with the purely academic part of those questions; I mean this—I have been advocating for years that we should have one special session devoted to the question of State Aid for the Blind. Not only this question or only that question, but upon our general attitude in dealing with the amelioration of the condition of the blind in reference to State Aid. Then when it came to the more practical questions it would not be so difficult to prevent ourselves taking more academic ground.

A little while ago I visited Australia, and I was told of the Invalidity

Pension in New South Wales. Unfortunately it is extremely difficult to work this Invalidity Pension, because a man who can get a certificate to the effect that he is unable to work may get this pension, and some people have got certificates from oculists on the ground that they have become blind, and these oculists have declared that they are unable to work, and thus they have the Invalidity Pension. I do not say that it is a reason for not having an Invalidity Pension, but I say that these matters of administration have to be attended to.

We have heard much of the work of private organisations. I think one great mistake that many of us are apt to make is that we think there is only one way of doing a thing—just as one is apt to think there are only two alternatives, and generally they are equally bad. If we believe that there should be some form of State Aid for benefiting the blind, it does not necessarily follow that that aid must take the form of pensions, and I would therefore suggest that pensions should be given in all cases where other forms of State, or individual, or self aid will not work. Because after all the best aid you can give to a person is to encourage him—to let him see what he can do. We have not to any extent reached the limit of human ability. We are fond of saying what the blind have done and can do; but we want to emphasize what they can do and have not done; and therefore I think that the individual will always come to the front if we give courage to those who need it.

The question of pensions in Reading is a very interesting one. I have a very great respect for Mr. Walford. He has done grand work for the blind. But without any reference to either him or his work I would like to say that I do not think that it necessarily proves anything at all to say that there are no blind beggars in a place. Of course we wish to diminish mendicancy, but there is such a thing as making a desert and calling it peace, and therefore I hope we will not be too willing to be satisfied because a certain result, good in itself, has been achieved.

I do not think I have any more to say on this subject.

Mr. Ness (Edinburgh): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I think we are all agreed that this question was brought before us in a most admirable way this morning, and I trust that the outcome of the lecture—it was delivered exceedingly well—will be that something practical will take place.

I was glad to hear the former speaker bring before you the cause of the outdoor blind in their own homes, as that class forms the great majority of the blind in Scotland; and as my time the other day was so limited, I should like to bring before you the objects for which our Society in Scotland exists. I do not know exactly the standing of

English Home Teaching Societies, and what is being done by them, but in Scotland the objects are—visiting, teaching, supplying books, rendering help, providing work, clothing the poor, and (in connection with the Edinburgh Society which I represent) granting pensions. Meetings, social and religious, are also organised. In carrying out these objects we have done our best, by the various agents of the different Societies in Scotland, for the blind there.

I may say that since the Edinburgh Conference was held we have a pension fund in connection with the Edinburgh and South-East of Scotland Society, which has now 60 blind people upon its roll, with pensions of from £8 to £10 each—a considerable addition to the income of those who receive them. Not only that, but the other day we purchased a Home in the country for giving our people a fornightly holiday in the summer. May I give an instance of how one Mission was originated? In Dundee there was no Society, and nothing was done for the blind in their own homes. Some of us felt this, and a gentleman was appointed to begin the work. He waited upon some of the manufacturers in Dundee, and obtained their sympathy and support. He has carried on the work there for nearly 30 years, with the result that not only has he established a pension fund, but by his visitation of Sunday Schools, and by speaking from pulpits, he raises a yearly fund of between £120 or £130 for benevolent purposes in connection with his work. He is also a trustee for one of the benevolent funds in Dundee, and I learn from Mr. Johnson's book that 37 blind people through his influence benefit therefrom. Will anyone say that £100 a year was too much for this work? I was very grieved indeed when I received a pamphlet here, in which it was stated how £200 was spent for Secretary and Superintendent, £48 for offices, lighting, and fuel, and only £150 for the relief of the blind. I say that was a travesty of the truth. What about the 37 people who, apart from this gentleman, would not have been helped at all? I think the Society is to be complimented on having called so much benevolent aid into existence.

I am very glad to have the opportunity of bearing out what has been said in regard to the excellent address we have listened to. I may say that State aid to a certain extent is clearly necessary in our work in connection with the outdoor blind.

Rev. S. F. Harris: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen—There is one point which I think might enter into the dlscussion—that is, the disqualification to receive pensions of those not only who now receive parish relief, but who have at any time received it. A great many

Charities absolutely exclude anyone from participation in their benefits if at any time they have had parish relief. I agree that those who are now having such relief might be disqualified, but very often, as one knows, through some temporary cause a person has been on the pauper list for a few weeks, and that ought not to take away his chance for life. I know it will be said that it is in the Trust Deeds; but I think we know enough of Charity Commissioners and their powers to believe it can be changed, and I think we ought to give some thought to the question whether a resolution should not be passed that parish relief at some former time should not be a disqualification from ever having a pension.

There is just another point; that is, with regard to the claim of the Blind for State Aid, beyond say the imbecile and the deaf and dumb. I have always been a great advocate for the interests of the deaf and dumb, and helped them on their several boards, but I can see a difference. The State Aid given to the Blind is more likely to be productive; the deaf and dumb have so many more opportunities of earning money, so many more employments are open to them, that they do not stand in the same need.

The Blind are shut up to such an extent to themselves, and it would be an angel, or one who would deserve the Victoria Cross, who could suggest another employment for them, and still more provide a market for their productions. The deaf and dumb can follow 200 different employments; I think therefore that the Blind have a much greater claim, and the aid given by the State would be much more productive than if given to the deaf and dumb or to the imbecile. Money given to either of the latter classes is charity, but it is not so productive, while I am persuaded that 5/- a week would be the means of drawing out the energies of the Blind and would bring in interest at a high rate; so I think that the Blind have an excellent claim on State Aid.

Mr. William Harris (Eastbourne): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen—I feel constrained to say a few words, because we are met together with the desire to promote the welfare and happiness of the Blind. God sometimes uses very feeble and unworthy instruments to carry out His work.

I was glad to see at the commencement of the paper this morning the recognition of God's work. If we take that as our guide we shall have success.

There are two or three subjects I thought I might mention. The difficulties are great, but they may be overcome, and I think we have

shown at this meeting that they will be overcome. We must remember that the real welfare and happiness of the blind does not consist only in financial help, though that is very needful. With regard to the difficulties and how they are to be overcome, I would suggest the use of the Bible Domestic Mission, founded by Mrs. Ranyard. Through their agents we could get all information about the blind persons.

With regard to qualifications, I would say none should be excluded —either worthy or unworthy. If worthy, they should have it; if they were unworthy, we would hope by God's blessing that the love of God might constrain them to become worthy.

I would suggest also as a moral that the Gardner's Trust is a very good illustration of how it could be done, and the pensions suggested should be subject to yearly renewal; it should not be an annual pension, but one that can be withdrawn if the member becomes unworthy. With regard to age, I do not think it kind to fix this at 70. Many persons at 70 years of age are more active than some at 50. I personally have been engaged in helping the blind for 50 years.

I ask the members of Conference to think of the home visitation— the great work done by ladies not belonging to any particular section, or church, or chapel, but ladies in general visiting the sick and poor. They would be able to give the character and worthiness of a person better than anyone else. The difficulty is not in finding the people, but in finding the worthiness of them, and I will repeat again that we are to take the unworthy as well as the worthy, and hope by the goodness of God to make them worthy.

Rev. F. F. Marsh (Sedgeberrow Rectory, Evesham) : Mr.Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—You are now considering perhaps one of the most important subjects that have come before you, and it is of course a most practical subject, and althongh you may bring sentiment to bear upon it, after all, what you have to face is Parliament, and Parliament is not a sentimental body, but is a body that considers £ s. d. above everything—except perhaps party politics. So I feel what we have to do is to endeavour to show Parliament that the expense will not be as great as they anticipate if pensions are granted to the blind. We have ro show to them that already they are paying expensive pensions to the blind men and women who are occupying their workhouses. When I remember that at the time I was teaching the blind to read in the Worcester workhouse there were six or seven blind men living there at the expense of the Government by reason of their very position, I think that money given to assist the blind to maintain themselves would

be well spent. I think that when we bring forward figures to show what the expense would be, we ought to take into consideration what the Government is now spending through the Guardians on such persons as occupy their workhouses, and I am sure you will agree that anything that can be done to get people out of the workhouse and give them a home of their own, and an interest in life—something to look forward to—must be a great blessing to the community. We know of course that one of the great ideas of the Guardians is to get people into workhouses—I do not know why—but if we can do something to get our blind brethren out of the workhouse we shall be doing much more good.

With regard to the proposition made by Miss Sadgrove, I am very sorry that I have not the same hope that she appears to have with regard to the reception which such a proposition made to the Guardians would get. I fear that they would not look upon it with any great favour ; they are so exceedingly slow in augmenting the relief given to anybody, and I think they would say at once "These blind people would be much better in here; they would be better provided for," and would use all sorts of auguments to try to make themselves believe it would be a waste of money, and that if their grants were not enough it would be no use granting more.

Now I think we ought to go straight to the fountain head of all taxation, to the Government itself, and demand from them what is really after all, only justice to the blind as citizens, and to ask that they shall have a moderate pension, and I shall be only too pleased myself to, endeavour to stir up my own member to co-operate with us in this respect, and I have some hope he may see his way to do so. I do not think that I need waste your time with any more remarks to-day. I only hope that the time will not be far distant when we shall see this an accomplished fact, but let us remember that if we want to get it we are not going to get it easily, and that it is the man or woman who speaks the loudest that is going to get what he or she wants in Parliament to-day, so I hope you will make a firm stand for what you want, and make the country understand you are determined to have it.

Mr. Miles Priestley (Bradford): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I would just like to say how glad I am that we are discussing such an important question. I want to refer briefly to the large class who are unable to obtain any kind of pension whatever. It seems to me that all blind persons should be attached to some Institution. All the blind in Bradford ought to be attached to the Bradford Institution. That is the first point. Then if we could secure grants sufficient

to enable us to pay a living wage, we should find all who were capable of working, some kind of suitable employment.

May I suggest that, notwithstanding what has been said, we should approach in a friendly manner the Boards of Guardians. I believe from what I have heard that adequate relief is not given because the Guardians are not cognisant of the true position of affairs. I believe that the Guardians will not only give relief, but, if cases are properly brought before them, the relief will be adequate. Here are a few cases that have been assisted by the Guardians in the City of Bradford:—

(1) A young man had no home, and required assistance. They paid the whole cost of his home until he could earn sufficient for his maintenance, and reduced the relief as he increased in wage-earning capacity.

(2) A girl employed under similar circumstances. This happened years ago, and she will never be able to maintain herself, therefore the Guardians have continued to augment her wages.

Then there are large numbers of cases where a married man with a wife and family to support, has lost his sight. Of course his wage-earning power is gone. To quote one case out of many I give the following:—

(3) A man who had three children lost his sight. The Guardians paid the whole cost of his maintenance in a home, where he was taught a trade. They made an adequate weekly allowance to the wife and three children at home. During the Coronation Week they also gave her 1/- extra for each child.

Well now, with the idea of showing the value of all this sort of thing, let us approach the Association I mentioned yesterday—the Poor Law Union Association in London. A member of that Association, and also a member of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law (Mr. F. H. Bentham), has promised to support what I have referred to, if the matter is brought before them. If the friends of the Blind will not take the subject before them, who is to do so? I hope we shall not dissolve this Conference without making some arrangement for this important question to be brought before that Association from our point of view. If anyone present would like to have particulars about this, there is a pamphlet at the door, by Mr. Tate (of Bradford), which will give all the information required.

Mr. Littlewood (Liverpool): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen—I will not detain you a moment. I am glad I followed Mr.

Priestley. I can illustrate what I want to say by quoting an instance in Liverpool.

A blind woman, in receipt of relief amounting to about 5/- a week took some years to obtain a pension of £6 a year through the Royal Blind Pension Society. The consequence is, the Board of Guardians are now considering whether she is in need of their relief; this will probably result in the relief being withdrawn, and whereas she was previously receiving 5/- a week from the Guardians, she will now have only 2/6 a week from the Pension Society. This shows that all Guardians are not as generous as those at Bradford, and I therefore should advise Mr. Priestley not to blow the trumpet too loudly, or all the Blind will flock to Bradford.

I advise our wicked Scotch members to see if they cannot get hold of Mr. Carnegie. I am sure if some of our millionaires could see for a day or two the effect of a small amount of money, there would be no need to ask the State for Pensions for the Blind.

Mr. Stott (Edinburgh): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I desire to associate myself with those who have expressed gratitude to the reader of this morning's paper. It contained in it that which is an answer to many of the difficulties that have presented themselves in connection with the better and more general employment of the blind; in this way, that our friend suggests to us that instead of the blind aspiring to reach the magic age of 70 when they may look for the Old Age Pension, they may think rather of striking off the nought and starting at 7. In this way, if pensions for the blind could be secured, it would enable at least those who for lack of funds are prevented from entering workshops, to have that which would maintain them during an apprenticeship. That would of course not meet the other question of what becomes of them after the apprenticeship. This I think broadens out into the general question of the State taking up the cause of the blind, and in addition to bestowing pensions on them, providing them with suitable employment, and that employment, as I have already stated from this platform, can only be provided by the Government. Surely when one thinks of the many large departments, the Admiralty, the Army, etc., and the enormous amount of scrubbing brushes that are required in connection with them, and the enormous quantity of baskets used in connection with the Post Office, one sees very easily how the whole of the able-bodied blind in this country could be provided with adequate employment of a reasonably remunerative nature.

Now with regard to our paper this morning. I should like to say

(referring again to that little place called Scotland), that I deplore the day for the blind when the outdoor Societies should be—affiliated, I was going to say, but I think my friend Mr. Priestley wanted them attached to the Institutions and perhaps this would be better. Well, I am satisfied that there is a large field for the agents and the agencies of the outdoor blind to deal with, by helping a class which it would be useless to bring into Institutions. They have reached a time of life, and are in such circumstances, that it would I think be fatal to their best interests to attempt to bring them into Institutions. And that brings me back to the paper. We want a pension for these people; we want to have a basis to start from, and then let that be augmented by the best means possible.

You have heard what one society and another is doing; I think we make a mistake in talking too much of what we do; we want at these Conferences to get at points and principles that will be permanently beneficial to the class in whose interests we are assembled. But perhaps I may be pardoned if I mention that the Royal Blind Asylum at Edinburgh does a little of this outdoor work too. For many years my directors have disbursed £500 per annum, which is dispensed in sums varying from £3 to £10 all over Scotland, and there is not a single county in Scotland where we have not one or more beneficiaries. In that connection a vast amount of information has passed through my hands, showing our utter inability to deal adequately with the cause of the blind, and we know the deserving character and necessitous circumstances of those people who are knocking at the door. Let us have State aid in the form of a pension from the earliest days. I confess to you that not until this morning did it ever occur to me that a pension might be applied beneficially from the earliest days of the child who has had the misfortune to lose its sight.

There are a few points I should like to make clear. One is, there seems to be an erroneous idea abroad as to the disability of persons in receipt of parochial relief to claim old age pensions. I beg to inform you that that is not the case. A person in receipt of parochial relief can claim the old age pension.

Another point I would suggest to those dealing with pensions is that they should keep clearly before them the fact that a pension can be granted up to the extent of (I am speaking of pensions from Institutions) say 8/- a week; beyond that it would simply be relieving the Old Age Pension Commissioners. Institutions could give 8/- a week on top of which 5/- could be got from the Old Age Pension Commissioners.

I am afraid my time must be gone, but there are a lot of points which it will be necessary to approach very carefully. It seems to me that the time has come when a decisive blow must be struck. Let it be seen to by those who have the aiming of that blow, that it is carefully, judiciously and well aimed, wisely directed, and sent home with the utmost of our power.

Miss Wilson (Leeds): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I do not propose to detain the Conference more than a minute, but I think Miss Sadgrove's proposition cannot be too strongly emphasised, and I therefore beg to support her in the suggestion that a recommendation be sent from this Conference to the Guardians of the Poor all over the country asking that greater consideration and a more generous allowance be given to the adult blind poor; because whatever Bradford may do, we in Leeds have a hard fight to get anything like adequate help for our people. Constantly cases come to our notice where the out-relief has been stopped without reason, and really I do not think a week passes without some of us going to the Guardians and fighting for some of the blind. The Guardians need educating, but some of them are very dull pupils.

Mr. H. J. Wilson (London): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, I do not rise to make a second speech, but Mr. Harris asked a question about Societies giving no pension to those who are in receipt of parish relief. That is true in most instances, but some Societies give pensions when the applicant has not received parochial relief within two years, and the Gardner's Trust makes the limit only one year. By the new scheme for Day's Charity recently drawn up by the Charity Commission, applicants must not have received parish relief within two years of their appointment.

In regard to what Miss Sadgrove and Miss Wilson have said about the small amount given by Boards of Guardians to the blind, I quite agree with them, but it seems to me that it would be far better if a message were sent to the Union of Unions. That body would feel strengthened, knowing that the Conference was at their back. I therefore suggest that a formal message to the Union of Unions be sent, requesting them to take steps to persuade the Guardians to increase their allowances to the blind. May I take it that that is your pleasure, with the Chairman's permission? (Cries of "Yes.")

Sir Francis Campbell: I have much pleasure in supporting that, and I would like to say one other thing. I hope that everybody here

will go home with the idea that they will see what influence they can bring to bear on their local Members of Parliament.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen,—Before I have the pleasure of calling upon Professor Lundberg for a reply, may I point out, as a Guardian of several years standing, one or two points where I think there is some misunderstanding. We must remember that the powers of Boards of Guardians at the present time are limited in many directions—they can only deal with actual destitution. It is true their powers of discretion have been extended of late years, but fundamentally the only duty they have to discharge is to relieve destitution, and I may say that an order has been issued quite lately—during the last year or two I think—an order from the Local Government Board, hampering the Guardians in this respect: that they have not only to take into consideration the actual means of those appealing for help, but also the money that enters the house. That is to say, if anybody appeals for relief, and they are apparently in a state of destitution, if they happen to be living in a house where the brother or the father happens to be earning a certain amount of money—if that money is 25/- or 30/- a week, they have to take that into consideration.

I am only pointing out these facts to show that the powers of the Guardians are not quite so extensive as you might imagine. I should also like to remind Mr. Marsh that unfortunately the money for the relief of the poor does not come from the Government, but from the ratepayers. A man may occupy only a small house, on five acres of land, but he has to pay Poor Rate on the whole of the land; therefore we must bear in mind that the Poor Law Guardians only deal with the money of the ratepayers, and not with that of the taxpayers of the country. If I might make a suggestion it would be this: I do agree strongly with Mr. Stott when he says that the time has come for a great blow to be struck on behalf of the poor blind. If a blow is to be struck I should strongly advise that we try and make it a national duty, and not merely a duty of the Board of Guardians. Anything that is associated with Poor Law relief has always a certain amount of stigma about it, and therefore instead of going so much to the Board of Guardians, I would rather centre our influence on the Government (whether it be a Liberal or a Conservative one), and try to get Parliament to take up the question, so that the blind might be a national trust and not be the recipients of a pauper's pittance.

The only objection I have to the word "pension" is that it seems to me to be associated with those past their prime, while I would rather yield this national help to the blind as an assistance to make up for the

deficiency of their affliction, and not merely to help them as a pension in the autumn of their lives, but rather as an encouragement to enable them to be of use to themselves and to the community at large.

PROFESSOR LUNDBERG (Sweden): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen—First, I would like to thank Conference very heartily for the kind attention they have given to the subject of my paper. It seems to me that in order to get something really efficient and useful out of the interesting discussions this day, it would be prudent to propose a resolution in accordance with the principles expressed here. With the kind permission of the Chairman, therefore, I now propose one. Does the majority of Conference approve of all the principles expressed in my paper? I appeal to you, Ladies and Gentlemen, to unite in the adoption of this resolution, seeing that it would act as an encouraging spur, stimulating the efforts of the blind and their friends all over the world, summoning them never to rest until every part of the question of the blind is definitely solved. The resolution runs as follows—

> "The Third Triennial Conference on the Blind, held at Exeter in July, 1911, expresses its warm and sincere sympathies with the proposition for ameliorating by means of uniform and general pensions the condition of the Indigent Blind, which are at present too unsatisfactory and unsafe, and urges upon the respective Governments the desirability of their co-operation in taking necessary measures to gain the long-wished-for solution of this important problem."

THE CHAIRMAN: I am informed that it is not quite in accordance with the order of procedure at these Conferences to have any resolutions submitted, bnt it would be very good as a recommendation to the Union of Unions, because there Is no objection to that.

MR. GREGORY (London): Yesterday, in spite of all standing orders, we did pass a resolution, and having thus broken the ice, as it were, we might follow yesterday's example and pass this resolution, which is the first international resolution that has ever been moved at an International Conference.

THE CHAIRMAN: May I ask what the resolution was?

MR. GREGORY: We resolved to send a message to the Government; it was moved by Mr. Pine and seconded by myself.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen,—I will take upon myself

the responsibility of putting the resolution to this gathering. I trust you will help me out if I get into a scrape.

(The resolution was put to the meeting and carried without opposition.)

PROFESSOR LUNDBERG (Sweden): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—Once more I thank you from the depths of my heart. I know the importance of this resolution. I must confess that I came here with the secret hope of realising something good in favour of the Blind, and I think that through the adoption of this resolution you have done your best in aiding us Blind to work steadily, satisfactorily and efficiently to our ideal aim—the intellectual and material welfare of the Blind.

MR. H. J. WILSON: Ladies and Gentlemen,—I understand that concludes the business, and I am sure you would not like Sir Robert Newman to leave the chair without according him a hearty vote of thanks.

(A vote of thanks was then passed with acclamation.)

FRIDAY AFTERNOON.

CHAIRMAN: Dr. Henry Davy.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen,—I am first going to ask Mr. Wilson, the Chairman of the Conference Committee, to say a few words.

MR. WILSON: I did not intend to speak so early, but we have among us this afternoon the Mayor of Exeter, and I think it would be a pity if he had to go away (as I believe he has to go to another meeting) before I move a vote of thanks to him. It is not merely a duty, but a very great and heartfelt pleasure to offer the Mayor, and through him this ancient and noteworthy City, our warmest thanks for the very kind welcome that has been extended to us here. I know we have all felt the magic of this historic old Cathedral City, and the atmosphere of dignity and high aims that it throws round such an assembly as this taking place in its midst; but we have felt even more—we have felt human kindness, friendship, and sympathy with our work as expressed to us through the Chief Magistrate of this City, and we cannot but give him our warmest thanks where they are so richly due, and assure him that by us, as a Conference, Exeter will never be forgotten, but remembered with the utmost gratitute and affection.

I should like to take this opportunity also of saying how extremely grateful we all are to the Town Clerk of this City for the trouble he took to explain the historic associations of your ancient Guildhall to our party.

I have pleasure in moving a hearty vote of thanks to the Mayor, which will be seconded by Mr. Illingworth and supported by Sir Francis Campbell.

MR. W. H. ILLINGWORTH (Manchester): I count it an honour that for the second time during this Conference I have been called upon to second a vote of thanks to the Mayor. I can practically only say "ditto" to all that Mr. Wilson has so nicely expressed, but I feel I would like to say one other thing with regard to this Conference, which owes so much to the Mayor and his colleagues in the management of this beautiful City. I hear all around me the delegates and members saying one to

the other, "We shall all remember Exeter." And it is very gratifying that apart from their admiration for the beauties that surround them, everybody will remember the Conference at Exeter by the striking evidence we have had of the benificent result of the Conferences in the past, and the various Committees and Associations that have arisen therefrom on behalf of the enhancement of the education and employment of the blind. I refer to the fact that we have here so many well educated blind men and women who have been able not only to say something, but something well worth hearing, for the advancement of the cause of blind education, and in a manner that would have done credit to any sighted speaker, I consider this is one of the best evidences of the progress we are making, and if these Conferences do no better thing than bring such evidence before the public. they are an encouragement to us all to go on with our work with renewed effort, in the hope that by and by we shall be able to feel that our work has not been in vain.

In a word then, I beg to second the vote of thanks proposed by Mr. Wilson to the Mayor and his colleagues.

Sir Francis Campbell (Norwood): Ladies and Gentlemen,—I very cordially support the resolution; and not only to the Mayor and Sheriff for their kindness, but I want also to include Mr. Collingwood. He is a remarkable manager. I do not know how many times he has written to me on one subject or another about the matters in connection with this Conference, but a letter has never been delayed by one post; he has always replied promptly. So I do hope, and I feel sure, that you will all join in a hearty vote of thanks to the Mayor, the Sheriff, and Mr. Collingwood.

(Put to the Meeting and carried with acclamation.)

The Mayor of Exeter: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Illingworth, and Sir Francis Campbell,—I am sure your time is too precious for me to make anything like a speech, but I would like to thank you for your hearty vote of thanks on behalf of myself and my friend the Sheriff and all those who have assisted to make the Conference a success. I think possibly we have got as much good out of the Conference as you have done. I remember no previous visit of a Conference of this kind here when the City has been so sure that they were learning something as well as offering hospitality. You strike one as being a business Conference, not only a junketing Conference out here for excursions, but one that means business. The dead earnestness

of the discussions have been a surprise to many, and I assure you that they have been very good instruction to us.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen,—Before Dr. Reid's paper is read I would like to thank you for the honour you have done me by asking that I should be your Chairman this afternoon. For more than 25 years I have been officially connected with the Blind in Exeter as Consulting Physician; although that office does not entail a great amount of work, I yield to none in the keen interest I take in the welfare of the blind. I can imagine nothing more impressive on the public than to see a Conference of this kind in our City—an assembly of distinguished blind people from all over the world, met to discuss means by which to ameliorate and improve their condition. This Conference has discussed a great variety of very important questions, but I do not think that any more important matter has come up for discussion than that we are approaching this afternoon in Dr. Reid's paper, for Ophthalmia Neonatorum, or the inflammation connected with the eyes of the newly born, is responsible for no less than one-third of the blindness in this country. I am very pleased that the chief knowledge that has been gained with regard to this disease has been brought about through the Committee of the British Medical Association which commenced its work when I had the honour of being President of that Association, and I am glad to realise that the knowledge that this Committee got together, and the report which they made, was the foundation of what I hope may be the means of extirpating altogether this disease from the causes of blindness. Dr. Reid's paper will show you that this disease is easily preventable to a very large extent, even if it may not be altogether extirpated. If only the Sanitary Authorities in England will take advantage of the Act of Parliament already in existence there is no need of special legislation. I must confess that I hope that one of the results of this Conference meeting in Exeter will be that the Sanitary Authorities of Exeter will take advantage of the very simple precautions, and the very comparatively inexpensive precautions which will be urged upon you for consideration. I think that Sanitary Authorities, and all civic authorities, are chary—and are very rightly chary—of spending their ratepayers' money, but the prevention of a disease which incapacitates people from earning a livelihood by numerous means, when such prevention can be brought about by a careful expenditure, is a pure matter of economy—not an expense at all. The education of an ordinary child of the poorer classes in England costs about £30 for the whole time; that is to say, £30 expended on an ordinary child will carry

it through an ordinary education and enable it to earn a livelihood, but the education of a child who has become blind through this disease, costs no less than £500. Now it is not a matter of sentiment, but of business, which urges one, and should urge the Sanitary Authorities, to expend a small amount of money to effect a very large economy.

With these few words, and once more thanking you for the honour you have done me in putting me in the chair, I will call for Dr. Reid's paper.

MR. C. M. COLLINGWOOD: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen, —On two or three occasions during this Conference I have had to apologise for the absence of the Chairman, but this is the first time that I have had to apologise for the reader of the paper. When I read the following letter and telegram, however, you will find that it is inevitable.

(Mr. Collingwood read letters and telegrams intimating that Dr. Reid was subpoened to attend the Shropshire Assizes, and regretting his enforced absence.)

That explains the absence of Dr. George Reid on this occasion. Under the circumstances I suppose it devolves upon the Secretary to do his best to fill Dr. Reid's place, although I feel sure that the paper will lose half of its vitality if the reader is not behind it to back it with his own remarks and his own enthusiasm.

(Paper by Dr. George Reid on "Preventable Blindness" read by Mr. C. M. Collingwood).

PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS FROM OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM.

By George Reid, M.D., D.P.H.

County Medical Officer of Staffordshire.

I have been asked to give an account of a recent movement with which I have been associated, for preventing blindness the result of ophthalmia neonatorum—inflamation of the eyes of the newly born. A conservative estimate has attributed to this cause one-third of the cases of permanent blindness in this country, and I have no hesitation in saying that, were it not for ignorance and neglect on the part of midwives and others in charge of lying-in women, blindness from this affection might be practically abolished. No doubt, in time, through the operation of the "Midwives Act," the number of cases will gradually diminish, but, it must be remembered, that the majority of midwives still practising are untrained women who were enrolled as midwives by reason of having been in practice twelve months previous to the passing of the Act. They are ignorant, dirty, though in many cases, kindly women ; mistaken tradition alone guides them in their work, and, needless to say, their well-meant efforts frequently expose lying-in women and newly-born infants to risks which too frequently lead to disastrous results. To these women, who at present greatly out-number the trained midwives, we cannot look for help.

Now with intelligent care of the infant, cases of ophthalmia need hardly ever occur, and when they do occur, simple treatment, if employed early enough—and that is of the utmost importance—should effect a cure practically in every

case. As we cannot, under existing circumstances, expect that the care needful to prevent the occurrence of the ailment will be generally available, at any rate for working class families, and as the essentials of treatment are outside the ken of the ordinary midwife, some plan must be devised, first for getting early knowledge of the cases, and secondly for supplying the simple though essential treatment. In other words, the notification of such cases to the Health Authorities must be made compulsory, and steps must be taken by these Authorities to ensure that medical attendance, and, if need be, skilled nursing is provided.

Both these essentials are provided for under the existing law in this country, therefore Local Authorities cannot justify delay in providing the needful machinery on the ground that their present public health powers are inadequate, and that fresh legislation is necessary. By a stroke of the pen they may determine that infantile ophthalmia shall be added to the list of diseases that are compulsorily notifiable under the "Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act," and thus secure the first requirement, namely, early information of the cases; and as regards the second—medical treatment and nursing—they already are enabled to provide both under Section 133 of the "Public Health Act."

Having regard to the serious consequences which follow the unskilled treatment of such cases, and in view of the fact, as I shall show presently, that the preventive machinery is both simple and inexpensive, one may well ask why Local Authorities have hitherto been content to let things alone, and thereby needlessly incur a very large expenditure in educating blind children in order that they may secure what, at best, as you are well aware, can only be a precarious livelihood. You must not suppose, however, that I am accusing Local Authorities of being dilatory in this respect, because until lately their expert advisers have not brought forward any specific proposals for dealing with the question; these

experts, therefore, must accept what blame may be attributable, and salve their consciences with the knowledge that usually it is the other way about.

Perhaps I may be excused for mentioning that the first practical proposal for dealing with this question originated in Staffordshire, the credit being mainly due to the late Mr. Greatbatch, Chairman of the Deaf and Blind School, Stoke-on-Trent, who, had it not been for his recent lamented death, would, I believe, have been present at this meeting. The circumstances which led Mr. Greatbatch to move in the matter, were as follows:—The question of increasing the accommodation at the Deaf and Blind School was under consideration, and, in reply to comments regarding the large expenditure which would have to be incurred, Mr. Folker, the Consulting Ophthalmic Surgeon of the Institution, pointed out that there would be no need for any enlargement if measures could be devised for providing proper treatment for infantile ophthalmia cases. This impressed Mr. Greatbatch very forcibly, and he approached the County Council and the Local Authorities in the County of Stafford, with the result that conferences were held and a scheme was formulated which is now in successful operation. I may say that no scheme with which I have been connected has ever been launched with such little trouble, the reason no doubt being that the arguments in favour of it, both humanitarian and economic, are so obvious and convincing.

For a trifling expenditure, as I shall show presently, this cause of permanent blindness may be practically abolished, and as it costs about £500 to educate a blind child, compared with £30, the cost of educating a normal child, the financial gain is very considerable. But this by no means represents the total economic gain, for I need not remind those present to-day that a blind person is of much less value to the State than one who possesses his sight.

Now with regard to the scheme. In the first place, as I

have said, the public health staff must receive early notification of the cases by including the affection among diseases which are compulsorily notifiable under the Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act. In addition to this, it is desirable, although not essential, that the Notification of Births Act, 1907, which is an adoptive Act, should be adopted, as the health visitor appointed under that Act is then available for following up the cases after the completion of the treatment in case of a relapse, and for the discovery of cases which may not have been notified—emergency cases, for example, not attended either by a doctor or midwife.

In the second place, provision must be made for the medical treatment and skilled nursing of the cases under Section 133 of the Public Health Act, 1875.

These requirements being provided for, let me sketch, shortly, what the procedure is :— On receipt of a notification, say, from a midwife, the Medical Officer of Health causes enquiry to be made into the circumstances, and takes steps to ensure that medical help is at once obtained, informing the medical man at the same time that, if required, the Authority will provide nurses for the case. If, on the other hand, the case is notified by a medical man, he is at once asked whether he desires that nurses shall be supplied.

Of course, the majority of such cases occur among the poorer classes, and, as a rule, they are not in a position to pay for skilled nursing, even for the few days that such is usually required. This being the case, it is essential that the Authority shall supply and pay for nursing help in cases which require it. In serious cases of this disease, success in treatment almost solely depends upon the constant presence of a trained nurse. However anxious the mother or person in charge of the infant may be to carry out the instructions of the doctor, the risks of unskilled attention are too great, simple though the curative measures are in skilled hands, to leave the nursing to any lay person who may be available.

The Authorities, therefore, should err on the safe side in providing nurses even for cases which may not in the first instance seem to be of a serious character. Of course it is necessary to make arrangements in advance to ensure that the services of a nurse or nurses shall be available at a moment's notice, and this can usually be done by arrangement with local Nursing Associations or Nursing Homes. It is important also that the nurses shall have had special training in the care of such cases, because so much depends upon the intelligence and care with which the treatment, simple though it is, is carried out. In most cases it is better not to rely on day nursing only, and, needless to say, when a nurse is required she should give undivided attention to the case during its critical stages, and not merely visit it at intervals during other nursing duties.

Among the very poor, in some cases, the home conditions may be such that removal of the infant and mother to the workhouse infirmary may be necessary, in which case the Poor Law Authority must defray the cost of the treatment. Apart from such cases, however, and they are not numerous, it is most desirable, for obvious reasons, that the needful treatment shall not involve the removal to an Institution of the mother and child.

So far, with two exceptions I believe, no difficulty has been experienced in inducing parents to avail themselves of the advantages of the scheme, but no doubt cases will occasionally be met with in which the action of the Authority may be resented, and to meet such cases it may be necessary to institute proceedings under the Children Act, 1908. One such prosecution, however, would probably have the effect of breaking down all subsequent opposition to the scheme in any particular locality.

I believe all the Authorities in whose districts the scheme is in operation at present, have assumed the responsibility of providing and paying for the nursing assistance needful,

but, so far as I know, only in one district has provision been made for defraying the cost of medical treatment also. No doubt experience will ultimately show that such provision is essential to complete success; medical men should not be asked by a Public Authority to undertake the treatment of this or any other form of illness unless the request carries with it an obligation to pay for such services. If it should happen that the family is in a position to refund all or a portion of the cost, then the Authority has the power to recover, but the medical man should be relieved of all responsibility in that respect. Sooner or later the basis of payment for such services will have to be fixed, and, whatever sum may be agreed upon, it is desirable that it be uniform throughout the country, and inclusive. In the one district where such provision has been made the fee paid is £1 1s. per case, and probably that may prove to be a reasonable one. No doubt, in a certain number of cases, that sum would be but poor remuneration for the services required; on the other hand, there are many mild cases which require little treatment, and these must be regarded as a set-off against the serious ones which call for more prolonged treatment.

Now as regards results. I have a good many returns from different districts in which the scheme has been in operation for varying periods, but time is required for all new schemes to get into effective operation, and, for that reason, I propose to utilize certain figures which the Medical Officer of Health of Stoke-on-Trent, has been good enough to supply me with, extending over a period of six months ended 31st March, 1911, and subsequent to a period during which every effort was made to perfect the machinery.

The population of Stoke-on-Trent is about 250,000, and during the six months the number of cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum notified was 68, representing a rate per annum

per thousand of the population of 0·54, and per thousand registered births of 18.

In 17 of the 68 cases, or 25 per cent., day nurses only were supplied by the Authority, and in three cases, 4·4 per cent., both day and night nurses were supplied. The percentage of cases in which nurses were supplied, therefore, was 29·4.

The average numbers of days during which the day nurses and night nurses attended were 9·4 and 7 respectively, and the mean cost per case in which nurses were supplied amounted to £2 12s. 6d., representing an average cost per case notified of 15s. 5d. In other words, the cost of the scheme as regards nursing, calculated per thousand of the population, only amounted to 4s. $2\frac{3}{4}$d., and if medical attendance at £1 1s. per case had been included, the cost would have been 5s. $10\frac{1}{2}$d.; by no means a large sum to pay having regard to the results which may be looked for, and representing a cost per case of only half that of isolating a case of scarlet fever in hospital.

Now it is impossible to say, in the absence of available figures, how many of the cases would have resulted in permanent blindness had this scheme not been in operation, but, as a fact, disregarding four cases of premature birth which died, and two cases in which the diagnosis, by midwives, were not verified, among the remaining 62 cases only one terminated in blindness, and in one other case, in which both eyes were seriously affected, the sight of one eye only was lost.

In all probability even the one failure and the partial failure might have been avoided had it not been that needless delay occurred between the onset of the symptoms and the provision of the nurse, namely, in the totally blind case, eight days; and in the other, four days.

I think, then, it may be said that experience, so far as it

goes, has proved the scheme to be a phenomenal success, and there is no reason why it should not be equally successful wherever adopted. Of course, having regard to the comparatively small number of cases, it is impossible to predict from those I have recorded that equal success may always be looked for, but with prompt notification of all cases, however slight, and the immediate supply of competent nurses when needful, I am confident that wherever adopted, such a scheme will amply justify the trifling expenditure it entails.

I am glad to say that in Staffordshire, schemes are, or soon will be, in operation in practically all the districts ; and certain other towns throughout England, including London, have followed suit. In Scotland, so far, only one town, namely Glasgow, has, I believe, determined to establish this system for dealing with such cases. I have no doubt that the results, which will soon be available on a large scale, will justify the Government in compelling all Authorities to make the needful provision. We cannot afford to wait until the present untrained midwives die out and are replaced by trained women, for that will not come about for a generation, and, even when that time comes, although the cases of infantile ophthalmia will no doubt be greatly reduced, we can hardly hope that they will cease entirely, therefore the machinery will have to be maintained.

I have no knowledge as to what other countries have done in this direction, nor do I know how they compare with England as regards the need for the adoption of preventive and curative measures as regards this disease, but no doubt some of those who are present will be able to enlighten us as to that.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am sure we are very much obliged to Mr. Collingwood for reading Dr. Reid's paper to us, and I hope it will lead to a good discussion.

DR. SHEPPARD (Liverpool): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—There is very little for me to say, except to endorse the contents and statements of the paper which has been read. At the Roman Catholic Blind Asylum in Liverpool, which I have the honour of representing here, we have about 120 children, nearly one half of whom are blind through this Infantile Ophthalmia—a disease which is surely as preventable as consumption—a disease which ought never to occur if proper aseptic and antiseptic treatment were instituted before birth. The cases occur generally among the poor, but the disease is also found among the well-to-do people, where we would least expect such a thing to happen. There we often find the most virulent cases, which no treatment will stop, and in many cases they go on in spite of all treatment to inevitable and total blindness. Early and immediate attention is the only thing that can be done to prevent the catastrophe. Every case should surely be reported to the Municipal Authorities, as well as typhoid or any other infectious disease. It is a disease more fearful in its results than typhoid fever, scarlet fever, or anything else you can mention. In Liverpool a large number of cases have been treated as in-patients at St. Paul's Eye Hospital, where they have constant attention during the day and night—constant attention every few minutes—and the results have been most satisfactory; there have been very few cases but that have got well—one here and there perhaps, but very few of them have ended disastrously. I have always found that among the poorer people, where there is a case of inflammation of the eyes of a baby the greatest solicitude is shown by the parents, and the gravity of the, situation appears to be realised by them; but still the children would be best removed, in the greatest number of cases, to special hospitals, rather than treated in surroundings that are often not sanitary and where relays of nurses cannot be supplied. Midwives no doubt are very often to be blamed, but it is not only in cases attended by midwives that the trouble occurs, but sometimes in cases where doctors have attended; sometimes the very worst are such. There is nothing to do in many instances but to see them go from bad to worse, in spite of the most modern treatments; but that ought not to be in the greater number of cases. I am quite sure that the majority of children could be cured if they were removed to special hospitals for special treatment, at the expense of the Municipal Authorities, seeing that such treatment would

be quite beyond the means of most of the working men in a large town to provide. All medical men, I am sure, are in favour of the notification of all these ophthalmia cases, and of their treatment at the expense of the Municipal Authorities where the parents are poor.

Rev. S. F. Harris: May we have a resolution?

The Chairman: Certainly, if you will send up a strongly worded resolution.

Mr. A. Cowan (Wavertree, Liverpool): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I am sorry that Dr. Reid is not here, because I feel that I have to quarrel with him. It is rather a dangerous thing to quarrel with a medical man when you are only an incompetent layman, but there are two points I must take up in his paper.

On page 54 we find it stated that the first practical proposal for dealing with this question originated in Staffordshire, and Mr. Greatbatch and Mr. Folker are mentioned. Now Mr. Folker confesses that he got the idea from Dr. Walker, of Liverpool, from a paper which he contributed to "The Ophthalmoscope" last year. I think that ought to be made clear.

On page 55, about half way down, Dr. Reid says, talking of the ordinary cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum, "It is most desirable for obvious reasons that the needful treatment shall not involve the removal of mother and child to an Institution." I am quite against that. Let us examine those obvious reasons. I have here a copy of the Opthalmoscope for February, 1910, which says:—"The fear of injury to the mother by the removal to hospital has proved groundless. Of seventy-one mothers who have been brought in, six only have given trouble; two had rises of temperatures due to constipation and cured by castor oil; two had slight mastitis; one, after being out of hospital for the afternoon, had bronchitis for two days; and one was sent in with foul lochia, which cleared up with douching in a short time."

That is the actual experience which we find in Liverpool. One thing I omitted to say was that Dr. Walker's scheme was in vogue as far back as 1908, and I think we shall all agree that treatment in hospital by surgeons, specialists, and trained nurses, is better than treatment by general practitioners and nurses in slums. I do not want to be hard on the general practitioners and nurses, but I think the specialists ought to have a chance, for this is such a dreadful disease.

Then coming to the matter of it being made a notifiable disease. I think it is our duty to see that every authority enforces this; they ought

all to do so, and we ought to insist upon it. I do not know if our Rev. friend there is preparing a resolution. Mr. Gregory spoke of breaking the ice in the matter of carrying resolutions, and I feel very much like saying let us all fall in on this matter. It is a most important thing. Before I close I would like to give you the figures for the last 3½ years in Liverpool :

In 1908-9 there were 186 cases treated, of which four became blind.

1909-10 there were 161 cases, and three became blind (note the progression).

In the first half of 1910-11, we have had 87 cases, and none have become blind.

Join these figures up and we get a total of 434 cases, out of which seven became blind, which is 1·6 per cent., and I think you will agree that that is not bad.

Another point in which I run up against Dr. Reid is this—last year at the Annual Meeting of the British Association he said that the Liverpool method had 10 per cent. of failures. I should like him to explain that. I fancy the mistake occurred through his taking into consideration local cases from Bootle, Birkenhead, Widnes, St. Helens, etc., and of course such cases do not arrive until it is too late. They must come practically as soon as they are born.

Mr. W. Littlewood (Liverpool): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I am rather in an unfortunate position, seeing that Dr. Walker has asked me to speak for him. I am glad Mr. Cowan had first innings and made his speech first, and I would like to congratulate him on his first appearance at a Conference.

The one point I would mention is that Liverpool can justly claim to be the first to institute separate wards where the mother and child can be removed in serious cases. I need not go into the argument, but I should like to say that Dr. Bishop Harman, of the London County Council, emphasises the difficulty of nursing the cases at home. Of course there are exceptions, but we can see that the possibility of doing justice to the cases in cramped and insanitary surroundings is very small. I think it much better to remove them to a clean, healthy ward in the hospital, where there are skilled nurses and specialists. Dr. Walker says this plan has been adopted by the Liverpool Authorities, and has been very successful. This department of the hospital was opened in 1908 with a ward of three beds and cots, and arrangements were made with the City Health Department for the use of an ambulance to transfer mother and child to hospital when necessary.

Mr. Cowan mentions seven cases of blindness after treatment ; in every instance, without exception, those cases arrived at the Hospital too late—the damage was already done. Some of the seven unsuccessful cases which Mr. Cowan referred to are mentioned in Dr. Walker's paper ; the first was thirteen weeks before it was brought to the hospital, the next eleven, the next four, the next sixteen, the next was totally blind when brought—so you see there was no chance. I should like to say, as a lay member, that when we consider that 434 cases were treated at one hospital, of which seven cases only resulted in blindness, and when we picture what is being done in other hospitals, I think you will admit that we all owe a deep debt of gratitude to those medical men who are doing such splendid work.

Mr. Barnes (Bristol): About five weeks ago a resolution was passed at Bristol to bring this under the Notifiable Diseases Act, and we were informed by the Clerk that it could not be done, as the disease was not infectious, but he promised to bring the matter before the Health Committee. No doubt it could be brought under the Notifiable Births Act. Since then, I am glad to say, they are going to put this suggestion into operation.

Mr. Collingwood: The reply to this is that I hold in my hand a letter from the Local Government Board, in which they say that the following Authorities are empowered to deal with the matter. Then follow a list of about a hundred Authorities.

Mr. A. B. Norwood (York): In speaking of the importance which is now being attached to this subject, I would like to say, as a member of the North of England Union, that on the formation of the Union in 1905 this was the first subject that attracted attention, and very valuable work was done at the beginning of this Union's existence by the first Organising Secretary, Miss Wright, and as a result of the attention which through her influence was directed to the matter, our Institution at York took this practical step. On the invitation of the Committee, all the midwives and other nurses of the City, from a list supplied by the Medical Officer, were invited to our Institution to an entertainment, and there they had an opportunity of seeing our blind people, and were told what percentage of the blindness was due to these preventable causes. The meeting was then addressed by the Medical Officer of the School, followed by an address by the Medical Officer of the City. The proper method of treatment was outlined, and advice was given, and all the nurses enjoyed the afternoon very much. I am told by the Medical

Officer of Health that never in his experience has he known anything of such an instructive nature. I think that is an experiment which might be adopted in other Institutions. I have only to add that at our last Annual Meeting a resolution on the lines of the one previously adopted at Birmingham was carried, and a notice is going out from our Institution asking all the Authorities in the County of Yorkshire to make this disease compulsorily notifiable.

Mr. H. J. Wilson (London): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I have only a few words to say. I cannot help thinking that this excellent paper will have a very good effect. Perhaps I ought not to criticise because Dr. Reid wished to make the paper concise, but I think it ought to be known that a great deal of spade work has been going on for years. More than 30 years ago there was a Dr. Roth, Hon. Secretary of the Society for the Prevention of Blindness. When he died the matter was taken up by Gardner's Trust, and the leaflet which he drew up is now issued by the Trust gratis. I wish to say also that the matter was referred to in the Report of the Royal Commission on the Blind in 1889; there it was recommended that information should be circulated through the Sanitary Authorities or the Post Office. I waited until 1896 to see if any action would be taken; I then wrote to the Postmaster-General and drew his attention to this paragraph in the Report, and a reply was received to the effect that the Postmaster-General was in sympathy with the movement, but he though that the Sanitary Authorities, rather than the Post Office, should deal with the matter. I then wrote to the Local Government Board, and they replied that the question of infantile ophthalmia was not in their province, but concerned the Poor Law Department. Well, after that, it was no use writing again, and I suggested to my Committee that they should circulate these leaflets which had previously been circulated with so much success by Dr. Roth. Since then we have distributed over 100,000 leaflets, and also 8,000 in Yiddish, and their distribution has been by no means casual. They have been sent to Clerks of Boards of Guardians in the Metropolitan area, also to Mothers' Unions, Charity Organisation Societies, etc. Most of the distribution of leaflets is now carried on by the newly-formed Unions.

As I understand that there are some here who are not aware what these Unions are, I would like to explain that England and Wales is divided into seven Unions or districts, consisting of certain counties, and these Unions are comprised of representatives of the various Societies and Institutions in the respective districts, who meet together

to prevent overlapping, and see that no blind person is uncared for. The Union of Unions is composed of three representatives of each Union, and they meet annually to discuss difficulties.

I mentioned the Yiddish papers, and I may say here how grateful I am to the Chief Rabbi, who very kindly had the translation made for me, and added at the end of the paper that he hoped that all mothers would follow out the good counsels contained in the leaflet. The papers were distributed through the Jewish Board of Guardians, and the Secretary of the Federation of Synagogues sent round papers recommending that one should be forwarded to every member of the Synagogue.

I think you should use your utmost endeavours to make the disease a notifiable one. It is very important indeed, and I would go a step further and add that it is most necessary that the Notification of Births Act should also be enforced, because under this Act visitors are appointed who could attend blind children. In this way you could have two strings to your bow.

Rev. S. F. Harris: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I am asked by Mr. Dixson to state that for 28 years this disease has been compulsorily notifiable in Germany.

The resolution I propose—

"That the Third International Conference on the Blind assembled at Exeter, July 3rd to 8th, 1911, submit that Ophthalmia Neonatorum should be added to the list of diseases compulsorily notifiable under the Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act; and that the Notification of Births Act 1907 should be adopted by each Authority."

My suggestion is that a copy of this resolution shall be sent to each local authority, and at the same time a parcel of the pamphlets should accompany the resolutions; if this is done I feel sure that much good will result.

Mr. Stott (Edinburgh): I would suggest that the figures be not included.

Rev. St. Clare Hill (Leatherhead): I take it that Mr. Stott's suggestion is one of policy.

Mr. Stott: The figures may not be correct, Sir, and I suggest they be not included.

Rev. St. Clare Hill: I will take the opportunity to remark that there is much to be said for the correctness of the figures, but I support Mr. Stott as a matter of policy. May I add that the disease is distinctly

infectious, in answer to my friend from Bristol, and it unfortunately arises that the seven cases of blindness were too long in being treated.

Mr. Frew Bryden (Glasgow): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I am pleased to be able to report that it was decided last week to make this disease compulsorily notifiable in Glasgow. This decision, coming from such an important City, should go a long way towards influencing others. Glasgow has adopted the plan for three years, at the end of which time it will be considered again. I think it is of great importance that such large cities take the lead.

Rev. St. Clare Hill (Leatherhead): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I have been asked to correct something.

The £30 which is stated to be the cost of educating an ordinary child, is for a day school. In the case of the blind it is necessary for the children to be educated, clothed and boarded.

The Chairman: Ladies and Gentlemen,—Instead of Mr. Harris's resolution, I suggest that the one drawn up by the Committee appointed by the International Conference be adopted—

> "That in the opinion of this Committee the disease known as Ophthalmia of the New Born should be added to the list of diseases compulsorily notifiable under the powers of the Infectious Diseases Notification Act, 1899."

This is quite a simple resolution, and I think it would answer the purpose.

I also propose—

> "That in the opinion of this Committee the adoption by the public authorities of the Early Notification of Births Act is urgent."

I will ask Mr. Collingwood to second that resolution.

Mr. C. M. Collingwood (Exeter): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—This is the first occasion during the week's Conference on which I have interposed in your debates, and I do not think I should have done so now but for the fact that the Report of your Committee on Preventable Blindness (which in my opinion was a most important report—even as important as the National Employment Committee) was yesterday passed over and taken as read; consequently no opportunity of discussing its merits or demerits was given, and there was no chance of analysing the work done or examining the results of that work.

Now that Committee, although not sitting permanently (for their work was practically completed at the end of twelve months), held a number of meetings during that time, went into the matter very carefully, and it was a very fortunate circumstance that at identically the same time the Committee to which Dr. Davy has referred—the one appointed here in Exeter in 1908—were also sitting, but dealing in a more complete manner than we were able to do, with the very same subject. But it is a fortunate fact for us that we were working on parallel lines, and that our Report, though not so lengthy as theirs, not going so much into detail, was almost a parallel report; and the most remarkable fact about it is that during the last two years, since those two reports were issued, these hundred Health Authorities have adopted it. Previous to that time I do not think anything of the kind had been done. I think I am safe in saying that it was within the last two years that these hundred towns and cities have, with the consent of the Local Government Board, made this disease notifiable. As Mr. Bryden said, some have made it a notifiable disease for a time only, by way of experiment, but I feel sure that when they have seen the advantages resulting from this step, there is little doubt but that they will make it permanent.

Our Report was rather extensively circulated, and I had intended to wind up by saying that I hoped every member assembled here would go away with the idea that whatever power they had in their own district should be used to create a healthy public opinion in regard to this matter, get the medical men and the members of County Councils to take it up, point out how important and how inexpensive it is, and what great benefits are to be derived therefrom. Our Report, as I have said, was extensively circulated; you will find that a very considerable number of daily papers in Great Britain and Ireland (a total of 193 in all) had copies sent to them, and a great number of them published sympathetic leaders, or quoted extracts from the Report.

One question I wish to speak upon is that Mr. Cowan said just now that he disagreed with Dr. Reid, inasmuch as he strongly supported the idea of taking the mothers and children into the hospitals. By all means let this be done if possible, but the trouble is that you may frighten the authorities with the cost of such a scheme. Where the cases are not extreme ones, I think there is no necessity for this to be done. As far as I have studied the question—and I have done so pretty closely—I think there is no necessity, except in extreme cases, for the mother to be removed; while the difference in expense is very large, and one which, if made too much of, will frighten the authorities. Get

in the thin end of the wedge by pointing out that the cost is infinitesimal, Quite recently I had to deal with our own Sanitary Committee here in Exeter on this very subject, and the first question they put to me was, "What is it going to cost?" I said, "Take our own Blue Books—how many notifiable diseases have you?" They were found to be seven in number. I said, "What have those seven diseases cost for notification during the last three years?" The reply was that in 1907-8 the fees of medical authorities were £21 5s. 6d., in 1908-9 they cost £22 15s., and in 1909-10 the figure was £32 15s. 6d.—making an average cost of £25 15s. 6d. per annum for the three years. I pointed out that as this cost covered the whole of the notifiable diseases, it was justifiable to assume that the addition of ophthalmia neonatorum to the list of notifiable diseases would not cost more than £6 a year. Now, if the notification of the disease in the City is only going to cost £6 a year, or even if it cost £60 a year, is it not worth while to adopt it? The education of one blind child in an Institution would cost £40 or perhaps more per annum. So, looked at from a purely economic point of view, there is a considerable saving to be effected.

With regard to one other point raised by Mr. Cowan, I can set his mind at rest. He says that Dr. Reid, he fancies, must have copied Dr. Walker, inasmuch as he followed on the same lines as Dr. Walker had done. I rather think Mr. Cowan will find that Dr. Walker and Dr. Reid and Dr. Folker have all been working on parallel lines for many years in their own districts.

In conclusion, Ladies and Gentlemen, I would venture—for after all my words are but halting—to quote to you words written on this subject in Maclure's Magazine, and are much more eloquent than anything I can say. I think they will be effective, though perhaps unnecessary with an audience such as this. I quote the words of Dr. Lewis, who is the recognised leader in New York on this particular subject:—

> "The duty of saving the child from this calamity is one devolving not only on the State—it rests on every right-minded individual to whom a knowledge of this danger comes. We cannot be censured for taking no action concerning conditions about which we have no knowledge; but when I demonstrate to you that there will be born in Massachusetts and in the City of Boston, during the coming year, hundreds of innocent, well-formed babies whose eyes may be injured or destroyed because right steps are not taken to protect them, then upon each one of us who knows and makes no effort to prevent this affliction will rest the responsibility for the result. It should be a self-imposed

task on every society for the prevention of cruelty to children, upon every charity organisation society, upon every legislator, upon every citizen, to promulgate a knowledge of the dangers which menance the babies of the land; and if they and we unite our efforts (for no movement should be attempted except with the authority and co-operation of the organised medical profession), this pathological anachronism of a controllable and preventable infection, which continues to work havoc and disaster in spite of twentieth century knowledge and methods, will be robbed of its virulence, and comfort and happiness and prosperity shall be assured for multitudes of children yet unborn."

Dr. Moon (Pittsburg): Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I had no intention, when I came to the meeting this afternoon, to say anything in reference to this matter, for I said my say at the last meeting in Manchester. I have nothing to add to what I said then, excepting that, residing, as I do, in Philadelphia, I know a little of what goes on in America, which has not been referred to on the present occasion. It has been decided by the authorities of the States of Massachusetts and New York, to place in the hands of the midwives small bottles containing a solution of nitrate of silver, which they are compelled to apply to the eyes of a newly born infant, doing away with the possibility that they may not be furnished with such a material. It has been thought wise to try this experiment and see how it works. I am not aware that the plan has been attempted in this country, but it might well be taken into consideration. In Philadelphia, New York and Chicago, Baltimore and Washington, the question of Preventable Blindness has become almost a household word. It has been made a public matter. It has been brought home to the public individually. I think that in these remarks about Infantile Ophthalmia, the fact has been overlooked that this question has received the attention of the medical profession for many years. When I was House Surgeon to an Ophthalmic Hospital in London years ago, I had to attend to such cases every morning, and I used to have them by the dozen. They all got well if they were brought for treatment in time. The medical profession has endeavoured to do its best, and the best proof of that is that the treatment used to-day in dealing with the disease is identical with that which was in use forty years ago. There has been no advance in this respect, but it has now become a matter for public consideration, and if you would like to adopt some of the methods used in America, you might hold meetings where the public could be educated up to their responsibility; teachers could

be brought together; all sorts of leaders of public thought could be assembled and talked to in a plain fashion. I think a great deal more may be obtained by educating the public than by so much legislation.

(The resolutions, which had been moved and seconded, were then put and declared carried.)

Dr. Reid (Stafford): As Mr. Collingwood has been good enough to send me a note of the discussion which followed the reading of my paper, I am able to reply to the comments of the speakers.

I am glad the Conference so cordially approved the scheme submitted for dealing with cases of infantile ophthalmia, and I hope that the publicity given to the question will result in many more Authorities adopting similar schemes, and thus prevent so fruitful a source of permanent blindness.

Arising out of the discussion there are only one or two matters which I need deal with:

I regret that Mr. Cowan should have formed the impression that I had overlooked the excellent work done in Liverpool, and no doubt I am to blame in not making it quite clear as to what I meant by saying that "The first practical proposal for dealing with this question originated in Staffordshire." What I wished to convey was that it was in that County that statutory Health Authorities adopted specific schemes the operation of which could be enforced by law, and I think I am right in saying so. Mr. Cowan also found fault with me for stating in a discussion on this subject in London a year ago, that in Liverpool they had had 10 per cent. of failures in the treatment of such cases under a voluntary scheme. My authority for that statement will be found in a paper on "The Prevention of Ophthalmia Neonatorum with Special Reference to the Teaching of Midwives" by Dr. A. Nimmo Walker in the issue of the "Journal of Obstretrics and Gynæcology of the British Empire," for June, 1910. The Liverpool method of dealing with the disease is described, and it is stated that of 79 cases of ophthalmia, 80 per cent. were treated at St. Paul's Hospital, and that as regards the remaining 20 per cent. of the cases, the disease was found upon enquiry to have developed ten days after birth. Of the 79 cases, 8 suffered more or less injury to the eyes (10 per cent.)—hence my statement. I may mention that my statement was made from my recollection of the paper referred to, and I am aware that recent results of the Liverpool method of dealing with such cases have been more satisfactory.

As regards the need for hospital treatment of such cases, referred to by Mr. Cowan and others, I hope it will not get abroad that there is

any such need, otherwise I fear it will be fatal to the movement, at any rate in some districts. Most parents would strongly object to compulsory removal to hospital, and, given efficient nursing—day and night if need be—I am satisfied that in the vast majority of cases the ailment, no matter how serious, can be successfully treated at home. There are cases, as I have stated, in which removal to hospital of mother and child may be necessary, and medically there is no reason why the mother should not be removed; but it is quite certain that less friction would arise if the treatment could be conducted at home with the help of experienced and specially trained nurses in constant attendance, and that this is practicable has been amply proved in Staffordshire. In my opinion it is only in cases where the worst home conditions exist that removal to hospital should be entertained. At the same time. the home treatment must not be provided for in a haphazard fashion. It is not sufficient to supply nurses, but care must be taken to ensure that the nurses provided by the Authority have been specially trained for this work. The machinery, therefore, must be provided in advance, and the officers of the Authorities must be in a position to supply, from one source or other, the expert nursing required at a moment's notice.

As regards the practice adopted in certain American towns, referred to by Dr. Moon, I do not fancy that many ophthalmic surgeons in this country would approve of the systematic use of silver nitrate solution by midwives, and I rather fancy that this method of treatment is not now considered to be essential even when the disease makes its appearance, and certainly not as a wholesale prophylactic.

Mr. Wilson: That concludes the business, and this is practically our last session. I am sure, therefore, you would wish me, on your behalf, to move a very hearty vote of thanks to Dr. Davy for kindly occupying the chair this afternoon, and also for his hospitality shown to us last night. At the same time I think we ought to move a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. and the Misses Heberden for the pleasant garden party they gave us yesterday afternoon.

I am sure we cannot separate as a Conference, after our delightful week in Exeter, without passing a full and hearty expression of thanks to Mr. Collingwood for the great debt of gratitude we owe him for his unstinted and unsparing labours on our behalf. We all know that he has worked early and late to ensure the smooth and efficient conduct of this Conference, and the result I need not describe. We have seen and felt it for ourselves, and I am certain that every member of this Conference regards him as a friend who has given not only time, thought,

and pains to the work, but more, he has given *himself* to the organising of our assembly; and we cannot adequately thank him. His best reward will, we hope, be the issue of this Conference in our increased love and care for the blind, and our progress in the wisdom and knowledge we ask for from on high to bring our efforts to bear fruit—not thirty or sixty—but a hundredfold.

Mr. Collingwood, we offer you the united and warmest thanks of the Conference, and wish also to connect with your name that of Mrs. Collingwood, who I know has been a real helpmeet to you.

Mr. W. H. P. Pine (Nottingham): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I am sure we all heartily associated ourselves with what Mr. Wilson has said in tendering our hearty thanks to Mr. Collingwood for all he has done. I think everything has gone well. We have had a most enjoyable time here, and a most instructive time, and I am sure that we shall go away from this Conference and this lovely district of Exeter imbued, strengthened, and cheered by all that has been done here. As one who had the honour of being the Hon. Secretary of the first International Conference, held in Edinburgh in 1905, I know what work there is in organising a Conference of this kind. It means great devotion, great unselfishness, and it means everything that takes it out of one and leaves a man thoroughly exhausted. I know at the end of the Edinburgh Conference I had no strength to do much more. I am sure we wish that Mr. Collingwood will have a long rest, and thank him very heartily for all that he has done. The greatest thanks we can give to him will be that this great cause which we have met to consider shall go forward, and greater progress be made. We feel that greater progress *is* being made, and we feel sure that the subjects we have discussed are moving rapidly forward.

I heartily second the resolution that our heartiest thanks are given to Mr. Collingwood for the success of this Conference.

Mr. Alric Lundberg (Sweden): Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—On behalf of all of us foreign representatives, who have for a week been the guests of Britannia and of Exeter, I beg to support the vote of thanks so justly due to the Conference Committee and the Hon. Secretary, Mr. Collingwood, for all the fatigue and exertions, and for the kind hospitality and friendly care so lavishly bestowed upon us. And in nearing the end of our time at Exeter, if we did not know it before, we know now that we are in a country which is the very centre and stronghold of fruitful philanthropy—a country in the fertile soil of which there have been growing up and flourishing from time imme-

morial the tenderest blossoms of human culture ever displayed. If we did not know it before, we have come to experience that wherever suffering humanity was crying out for consolation, charitable minds in Great Britain and Ireland have always been in the foremost rank. No wonder then that in every page of your glorious history we find the names of great philanthropists, emanicipators, and comforters. I remember just now the name of William Wilberforce in the 18th century; I remember Moses Montefiore; I remember the Earl of Shaftesbury, Dr. Barnardo, and by their side the heroine of the Crimean War, Miss Florence Nightingale. And then, proceeding to the world of the blind, I see a couple of names beaming with undiminished splendour through all time: two Kings William—William Moon and William Armitage: not to speak of the living, the venerable master of the Royal Normal College for the Blind, Sir Francis Campbell. These are names never to be forgotten by the blind and their friends when gathered together on occasions such as this.

It does not appertain to me to sum up the account of this Conference, but whatever its results, however divided may have been the opinions expressed, I think we may agree in one main thing—that this, our visit to the ancient City of Exeter, has been worth while. We foreign representatives return to our homes with minds full of fresh hopes and fresh impressions, enabling us with renewed force to continue our work for those confided to our charge.

I support the vote of thanks in maintaining that this Third International Conference within British borders will prove to be even a greater success than the Conferences at Edinburgh and Manchester. I give my thanks to the Conference Committee, to Mr. Wilson (before whose many years' experience and work I make my profound reverence), to Mr. Collingwood, and to all—none are forgotten. Long live the workers in the cause of the blind. Long may they live, and may God's blessing rest upon them and upon their work.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen,—The resolution is that the best thanks of the Conference be tendered, among others, to Mr. and Mrs. Collingwood, and I am sure from the way you have received the speeches you will pass that with acclamation.

(Carried unanimously).

MR. C. M. COLLINGWOOD: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I hardly need say that I am deeply grateful to you for the kindness with which you have received this proposal from Mr. Wilson, who, with

a courtesy of which he can never divest himself even when he has been most tried, has glossed over my imperfections (and no one realises them more than I do myself) with regard to this Conference. If I could have done better, I beg you to weigh up what has been good and put that against what has been lacking, and say, "After all he was only one, and had to do it by himself." And that is practically what this Conference has resolved itself into. In thanking me you are thanking the Conference Committee; I have only been its mouthpiece, or its worker at the other end of the wire, and if it has been a busy time for me, this week has been a comparatively easy one. It has been very heavy work I can assure you. It is very easy to sit in a chair and criticise—I can do that myself, if I cannot do anything else. But again I must ask you—those who think you could have done much better—to try and put yourselves in my place. The best general cannot use his strategy if he has no forces to utilise. There are, I know, many shortcomings to be put to my account, and I beg of you to excuse them. No one could have taken up the work more whole-heartedly than I have done, I assure you. No one could have been more sanguine than I, I assure you. No one knows the difficulties that I have recently had to encounter in so many directions, and that had to be overcome to get at what I wanted to achieve.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I take this opportunity of saying to Mr. Wilson that if he thinks in any way I have not consulted him sufficiently, I know he will pardon me. I know that I have often not referred to him when I might have done so; but when I tell him that I was never discourteous to anyone in my life, and last of all would be to him, and when I tell him that when I have not gone to him about matters it was with the object of saving him trouble, I hope he will pardon me and believe that I have done the best I could.

Ladies and Gentlemen, if you are gratified I am satisfied, and inasmuch as you are satisfied I am gratified.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Lundberg has received a telegram:

"Present in thought. From 2000 blind Swedes at Zurich."

MR. DIXSON (Oxford): May I say, as a member of the coming Conference Committee, that we hope that the members of this Conference—or the next Conference if you prefer to call it so—will simply flood us with suggestions for the next Conference.

MR. TATE (Bradford): May I suggest that that be added to the list of subjects to be discussed at the informal meeting this evening?

A Benediction was given by the Rev. S. F. Harris, and after singing the National Anthem, the Conference broke up.

SATURDAY, JULY 8th.

EXCURSION DOWN THE RIVER DART.

(The English Rhine).

A considerable number of Members and Delegates availed themselves of this opportunity to visit one of the most beautiful of Devon's rivers. Delightful weather prevailed.

The journey was made by the 8.52 a.m. train from Exeter to Totnes, a picturesque town on the Dart. This town is of great antiquity, its foundation being attributed to Brutus of Troy, who determined to rest there after his wanderings. The stone upon which he stepped to shore is still in existence, and is the one upon which the Mayor stands when it is his duty to proclaim a new Sovereign.

The visit to the Castle and the Church proved both interesting and instructive. The Castle is supposed to have been built by Judhael de Totnes, on whom William of Normandy bestowed the town. The only remaining portions of the Castle are the walls and the keep.

The Church is a very fine building in the Perpendicular Style, having a battlemented tower from which grotesque gargoyles peer down from the roof. The great treasure of the Church is its stone screen, carved so finely that the pattern seems like lace-work. Under the tower is a monument to Christopher Blackhall, who died in 1635, and his four wives. The dates of their deaths are clearly marked by the different fashions of their dresses.

The old Guild Hall was also visited. Its feature of attraction was the fine old " Linen pattern " carving.

Lunch was partaken of at the Seven Stars Hotel, and ample justice was done to the excellent fare provided.

After lunch the journey to Dartmouth was made by steamer, passing on the way the lovely woods of Sharpham, the village of Sandridge (the home of Captain John Davies or Davis), and the village of Dittisham (the home of Sir Humphrey Gilbert).

Dartmouth is situated on the right bank of the Dart, and is a town of great antiquity. It furnished ships for the third Crusade (Richard I.),

it was famous in the retreat of Warwick the King-maker, in 1470, and figured in the Civil War of 1642, and the Revolution of 1688.

A visit was paid to the Castle. The present structure was built in the reign of Henry VII. on the site of an older one, and possessed a strong chain which was stretched across to a rock near the Castle of King's Wear on the opposite bank. The grooves and holes in the rock where the chain was fastened, may still be seen.

The Church of St. Saviour's was next visited. Its chief features are its beautifully carved screen, and its niched pulpit.

During late years a Naval College has been built here to replace the old Training-ships.

After partaking of tea, the return journey to Exeter was made via Paignton, Torquay and Newton Abbot.

HOSPITALITY.

The Conference was most hospitably entertained by the ancient City, the civic reception being held at the Royal Albert Memorial on Monday evening, July 3rd, where the Mayor and Mayoress were assisted in receiving their guests by the Sheriff of Exeter and Mrs. Owen. The members of the Conference attended in large numbers, and much enjoyed a concert provided by the string band of the 3rd Devon Regiment, besides several piano duets and songs well rendered by blind artistes.

A Garden Party was also given by Mr. and the Misses Heberden, at Elmfield House, and an evening party by Dr. and Miss Davy at Southernhay House, both of which most kind entertainments afforded the members of the Conference the greatest pleasure, the change from their labours in the Barnfield Hall to the rest and the kind welcome that awaited them among the beauties of nature, being a real refreshment of the spirit.

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On the Tuesday evening a very remarkable Concert, organised by Mr. Platt, took place in the Barnfield Hall, and was very well attended, the Mayor and Mayoress also being present. It consisted largely of music by blind composers, rendered by blind artistes, and the programme, both in composition and execution, gave unqualified pleasure to the large audience.

Other features of the Conference were interesting lectures by Capt. Peirson-Webber on Poultry Culture; one on the Comedy of Daily Life by Mr. H. C. Preece, Travelling Secretary to the British and Foreign Blind Association; and Demonstrations in Massage, by Mr. William McKechnie, a blind masseur.